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Charles Kingsley

and

The Christian Social Movement

By

CHARLES WILLIAM STUBBS, D.D.
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Author of "Village Politics", "Christ and Democracy", "Christ and Economics", &c. &c.

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GLASGOW AND DUBLIN
1904

PF 843 .S7 1904

Published 1899; reprinted 1900, 1904.

Preface

The genesis of the Christian Social Movement of the present century, and the filiation of its ideas, of which the present memoir is intended to be a brief record, were both democratic and Christian. What I have written in the following pages, therefore, will be found to be complementary, on the one hand, to the introductory volume of this series by Mr. J. Holland Rose on *The Rise of Democracy*, and, on the other, to the volume on *The Anglican Revival* by Canon Overton. In the first volume Mr. Rose gave a fairly full account of the rise of the democratic movement in England, and a sketch of those "Parliament men" and others who, sixty years ago, succeeded in stirring up the English artisans to that action which finally resulted in the cession of most of their reasonable demands by the State, and in the event has led to the beneficial labour legislation of our own day. It has been my endeavour in the present volume to supplement Mr. Rose's sketch by a somewhat fuller account of the Christian Socialists of 1848, and of their influence in turning the political and economic aspirations of the Chartist workmen into the more

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peaceful paths of trade-unionism and industrial co-operation.[1]

Canon Overton in his book has given a succinct account of the Anglican Revival, of that renewed activity in the English Church which is associated chiefly with the names of such typical men as Keble, Pusey, and Newman. It has seemed to me, however, that no history, however short, of the religious movement of the Victorian era can be complete which omits the name of Frederick Denison Maurice, and gives no estimate of the remarkable influence which that perhaps greatest, certainly most typical, theologian of the nineteenth century has exerted upon the later developments of Church life and thought.

I have endeavoured, therefore, in my introductory chapter to give an estimate of the position and place of that great thinker, and to trace briefly the filiation of those ideas, which are called socialistic, and which, as a motive force to social service, whether by the State or the individual, are now so dominant among us, to their true source, in that restatement of the great Christian doctrine of the Incarnation as the exaltation of human nature, and the consecration of all human relations, by which Maurice has laid the English State, no less than the English Church, under so deep a debt.

I have told the story of the movement in especial connection with the life of Charles Kingsley for

[1] A recent volume of this series, *Provident Societies and Industrial Welfare*, by Mr. E. W. Brabrook, C.B., Registrar of Friendly Societies, has dealt more in detail with the development of these societies.

two reasons. In the first place, because, although Maurice was its real founder, no name is more closely associated in the public mind with the move ment than that of "Parson Lot", the pseudonym under which Kingsley wrote "Cheap Clothes and Nasty" and the earliest of the Christian Socialist tracts. And, in the second place, because I am desirous that these pages should not wholly fail to pass on to a younger generation some of that impulse to works of social service and civic reform which I and my contemporaries thirty years ago at Cambridge received from the chivalrous teaching and fine character of Charles Kingsley. Facts are always more stimulating when told in relation to a personality.

But, of course, this Monograph makes no pretence, even on a small scale, to describe the details of Kingsley's life. The *Letters and Memories of Charles Kingsley*, edited by his wife, must always remain the sufficient record of his life, as it is undoubtedly one of the most inspiring of modern biographies.

It only remains for me to acknowledge my indebtedness, in the compilation of these pages, to that book, and my gratitude to Miss Kingsley for her courtesy in allowing me to make quotations from it. My sincere thanks are due to Messrs. Macmillan & Co., Limited, for readily granting to me similar permission in regard to the other works of Charles Kingsley—the Poems, the Sermons, the *Prose Idylls*, &c.—of which they hold the copyright, and also in regard to the *Life of Frederick*

Denison Maurice, by his son. To the articles in the *Economic Review*, by the late Judge Hughes, on "Frederick Maurice" and on "J. Vansittart Neale"; and to the two articles in the same Review by Mr. J. M. Ludlow on "The Christian Socialists of 1848", I am also indebted. My special thanks are due to Mr. Bowes of Cambridge for his kind permission to use the copy of *Politics for the People* which had belonged to its first publisher, Mr. J. W. Parker, and which contained his MS. notes of the names of the various writers of the Tracts.

CHARLES W. STUBBS.

THE DEANERY, ELY,
December, 1898.

Contents

	Page
CHAPTER I	
Introductory	11
CHAPTER II	
A Poet, his Birth and Environment	30
CHAPTER III	
The Country Parson and Village Problems	48
CHAPTER IV	
Lessons in Village Citizenship	73
CHAPTER V	
"Politics for the People"	97
CHAPTER VI	
The Christian Socialists	129
CHAPTER VII	
The Science and Duty of Health	159
CHAPTER VIII	
Some Personal Characteristics	180
INDEX	197

Charles Kingsley.

Chapter I.

Introduction.

"Charles Kingsley could not help being a genius, and he would have been one had he never heard of Mr. Maurice. But his whole Theology is drawn from Mr. Maurice: his chief mission was to be a popularizer of the principles set forth by Mr. Maurice. . . . I was staying with him at Eversley one Sunday, and he said to me, with his characteristic stutter, 'N-now, J-j-john T-townsend' (a name under which I used to write), 'I am g-going to t-take a s-sermon of M-maurice's and t-turn it into l-language understanded of the p-people'. To do him justice, the sermon in question was so transformed by his genius that no one but himself could have accused him of plagiarism."

J. M. Ludlow.

Two thousand years ago, when the water-wheel was first introduced into Europe from the East, the Greek poet Antiparos, in some verses which have come down to us, sang this song of the Triumph of Labour:—

"O Labourers! who turn the millstone,
Spare your hands and sleep in peace.

In vain the shrill voice of the cock shall hail the daylight: sleep on!
By order of Demeter, your labour shall be done for you by the water nymphs.
Shining and light, they shall leap upon the wheel as it revolves;
They shall drag round the axle with its spokes, and put in motion the great millstone which turns round and round.
Live ye the happy life of your fathers, and enjoy without irksome toil
The blessings which the goddess showers upon you."

Fifty years ago, when applied science, our modern Demeter, was, by the application of steam-power to machinery, revolutionizing the manufacturing industries of England, and a new epoch of social happiness, one would have thought, was about to open for the world of labour, an English poet might surely be expected to sing the same song as that of his Greek brother. But after two thousand years the economic millennium was as far off as ever. The triumph-song of labour could not yet be sung.

"Weep, weep, weep and weep
For pauper, dolt and slave!
Hark! from wasted moor and fen,
Feverous alley, stifling den,
Swells the wail of Saxon men—
Work! or the grave!

Down, down, down and down
With idler, knave and tyrant!
Why for sluggards cark and moil?
He that will not live by toil
Has no right on English soil!
God's word's our warrant!"

So sang Charles Kingsley half a century ago. Machinery, it was true, had multiplied riches and created leisure. But who were those who were to enjoy them?

Here is the great practical problem of modern life.

How Charles Kingsley faced that problem; how he and his friends challenged our modern consecrated regime of individualism and competition, refusing to accept as final the pessimistic dogmas of an economic science which forgot that in the last resort the problem was not about wealth but about men; how they endeavoured to formulate a social science in which co-operation rather than competition should be the true law of industrial relationships, and did in fact succeed in laying the foundation of what has proved the most hopeful industrial experiment of the century,—the organization of the great co-operative movement, which has already amassed a capital of fourteen millions, and by its system of feder-

ated societies bids fair to absorb the greater part of the retail trade of the country;—how they fought the early battles of sanitary reform, and laid down those principles of the science of public health, whose legal enforcement now forms so large a part of the administrative work of municipalities and other local authorities; and how, finally, because the public remedy of social evils always runs up at last into moral considerations, they endeavoured, and not altogether in vain, to awaken the conscience of both the English Church and the English people to regard all these great questions from the Christian point of sight,—it will be my chief object in this monograph to make plain.

In a former volume of this series, Canon Overton has told with faithfulness and impartiality the story of the Anglican Revival, and no one who reads that story can deny the immense debt which the English people, no less than the English Church, owes to that remarkable movement. For it had brought home to the hearts of the English people the reality of a great spiritual society, extending through all Christian ages, a storehouse of Redemption for ever, open to all men, inviting all men; a Body, as the apostle calls it, a King-

dom, a Church, having a vitality of its own, a life which is in Christ; having a corporeity of its own, in and through and by which the life works; having an administration of its own, laws and rights and usages quickened by the living spirit; possessed—in its "notes" of succession and dogma and sacrament — of continuity, visibility, authority; being in fact God's accredited witness to mankind of His purposes and His benefits.

But there is another aspect of the great religious movement of our time which Canon Overton could not notice in the brief space at his disposal. To revive "the grandeur and force of historical communion and church life" in England, and "no less the true place of beauty and art in worship", was undoubtedly the work of the Oxford Movement. But "the Oxford Movement" is hardly the full equivalent of "the Anglican Revival". The two terms are by no means convertible. Newman and Pusey and Keble and Williams and Marriott are names of great Christian doctors of the English Church in the nineteenth century which must always stand out prominently from the page of history; but there is another name, not once mentioned in Canon Overton's book, for which, never-

theless, the churchmen of a succeeding generation are likely to demand a still more prominent historical place than theirs — I mean the name of Frederick Denison Maurice. Certainly no estimate of the Anglican Revival can be an exhaustive one which omits the influence of that great teacher's thought and work.

Indeed it is hardly too much to say that it was the doctrine of Maurice, rather than that of Pusey or Newman, which for forty years—Maurice began his work in 1835; he died in 1872—"kept the whole of the forward movement in the social and political life of the English people in union with God and identified with religion", a doctrine which, idealized and transfigured in the two great poets of the century, Tennyson and Browning, dominant in the teaching of the Cambridge schools of Lightfoot and Westcott and Hort, assimilated, as it would seem almost unconsciously, by the younger Oxford theologians of the *Lux Mundi* school, has, during this last decade of the century, turned so wisely the current of our English Christianity to the consideration of the great social problems of the age, and is at this moment so profoundly affecting, moulding, inspiring, transfiguring the social ideals of the present.

Towards the close of the year 1835—two years only after the publication of the sermon by John Keble on "National Apostasy", which is usually given as the date of the actual overt beginning of "the Oxford Movement"—Maurice had written, at the desire of Hugh James Rose, the distinguished Cambridge pioneer of the Oxford movement, an article in the *Encyclopædia Metropolitana* on "Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy". That article gradually expanded into a complete history of philosophy, and practically occupied him for the rest of his life, all his other work, literary, theological, professorial, for forty years, tending in fact to aid and complete this one. The book is a remarkable one, and has long taken its place as a standard work of English literature. It is full of dramatic interest, dramatic, that is, in the sense that the author all through its pages is always anxious to assert for each great leader of the world's thought his own position, not anxious to merge it in that of some other. It is full too of divine philosophy, luminous with the richest lights of meditative genius, which no really thoughtful and spiritual mind can read unmoved. But the book is also remarkable for another reason. It contains

perhaps the earliest, certainly the earliest authoritative, statement in our time, of that special view of the doctrine of the Incarnation, which, in the last decades of the century, has become the dominant thought of the new Oxford school, who, under the able and courageous leadership of Canon Gore, "regard themselves as adjusting the High Church theology of Dr. Pusey and his generation to the newer knowledge of our day", and are in reality but following the lead given by Mr. Maurice more than sixty years ago.

I do not mean, of course, to assert that the doctrine of the Incarnation in its modern restatement originated with Maurice. He himself freely confessed his obligations to Coleridge, to Erskine of Linlathen, to Alexander Knox. And the history of the heredity of the doctrine may easily be traced backwards through the Cambridge Platonists of the seventeenth century,—Dr. Cudworth, John Smith, Benjamin Whichcot, to the Oxford reformers of the fifteenth century, those children of the revival of learning,—Colet, Erasmus, and More, back to the great Greek Christian fathers of the early church,—Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Hippolytus. The

doctrine was not indeed new. But Maurice was the writer who first in our century set it forth in the new form which the new age needed. As Chaucer says, his was "the newë corne which cometh year by year out of the oldë fields". Compare, for example, the brilliant essay in *Lux Mundi*, by Mr. Illingworth, on "The Incarnation and Development", especially the passage towards the close of that essay beginning with the words—"The Incarnation opened heaven, for it was the revelation of the Word; but it also reconsecrated earth, for the Word was made flesh and dwelt among men",—with the chapter in Maurice's *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy* on "Philo and the Alexandrian school", or the later chapters on the neo-Platonists, and you will see how clearly, sixty years ago, Maurice had grasped the truth of the creative and administrative work of the Pre-incarnate Word and the Incarnate Christ, which our age needed, to give unity and breadth and fulness to its theological conceptions, and also no less to connect for the Christian evolutionist both the revelations of science and the developments of history,—the study of which has influenced so deeply the later phases of the Anglican Revival,

—with the operation of the same Divine Word.

That doctrine I may briefly summarize thus:—

The Christian creed announces to us not, in the first place, a world-wide philosophy, or even a universal religion, or a definite institution in "the Church", but it introduces us to a supreme Person—Jesus Christ, our Lord. In heaven as on earth, over things invisible as over things visible, over things immaterial as over things material, this Person is represented as supreme.

In the natural creation, in the universe, His supremacy is that of the eternal reason, the Pre-incarnate Word of God, the Logos of Greek thought, by whose agency the world of matter was created and is sustained, who is at once the beginning and the end of material things. "All things have been created through Him and unto Him."

And in the spiritual creation, in the Church, this same Person is represented as the inspirer and the illuminator of man in his intellectual being, the light and the life of humanity, the revealer to man of the Divine character, "manifesting God with increasing clearness at each successive stage in the great

scale of being", until, in the fulness of time, He Himself "for us men and for our salvation came down from heaven, and . . . was incarnate . . . and was made man".

This was the doctrine which Maurice accepted as the true centre and basis of all Christian philosophy. It is the master-note of all his teaching, not least of his teaching on the social problems of the age. For he saw clearly that the doctrine of the Incarnation means, in the first place, that God has a plan for the world: it means that order and progress in human civilization is real: it means that the policy of the cynic and social agnostic is not only not true, but is a gross blasphemy against God's purpose for humanity: it means that God has for the world a great educational plan by which both the perfection of the individual and the perfection of the race are to be accomplished: it means that in the development of that plan each age of the world has its own special work to do: it means that progress through order is not only a vital fact of human existence, but that it is its vital law: it means that there *is* a Christian ideal for society, for no human relationship can really be outside the Divine kingdom: it means that there *is* a social

order which is the best, and that towards this order the world is gradually moving: it means, finally, that the Church of Christ is a sovereign society, embracing in one comprehensive unity all realms of human thought and action, because Christ in becoming incarnate did not desert the rest of His creation, but is the quickening impulse of all that is good in modern civilization, the nourisher of new graces in the ever-widening circles of the family, the society, the state, the Inspirer of all true art, literature, morals, government, by lifting them all into a higher atmosphere of hopefulness than was ever possible until He came, "the Head over all things to the Church, . . . the fulness of Him that filleth all in all".

It is not difficult, I think, to see how this doctrine, which Maurice rightly regarded as the very root and ground of theology, led him, in face of the great social distress of the country and consequent democratic agitation, culminating in the formidable Chartist demonstration of April 10, 1848, to consider how he and his friends, who had been brought by direct conference with the working-men of England to know something at first hand of their aspirations and hopes, both political and social, could best help in turning these hopes

and aspirations, by the application of Christian principles, from revolutionary courses to methods which might lead to stable and conservative, and therefore permanent progress. This Mr. Maurice did by his organization of the movement which came to be known by the name of *Christian Socialism*. In subsequent chapters I shall have to tell in some detail the history of this movement. Let me, however, close this chapter with two quotations from Mr. Maurice, which will make plain the essential principles of his social teaching.

And first as to the exact reason which prompted the adoption of the term "Christian Socialism" as a description of the movement:—

"My dear friend," wrote Maurice to Mr. Ludlow in the beginning of 1850, "I see it clearly. We must not beat about the bush. What right have we to address the English people? We must have something special to tell them, or we ought not to speak. 'Tracts on Christian Socialism' is, it seems to me, the only title which will define our object, and will commit us at once to the conflict we must engage in sooner or later with the unsocial Christians and the unchristian Socialists. It is a great thing not to leave people to poke out our object and proclaim it with infinite triumph. 'Why, you are Socialists in disguise!' 'In disguise! not a bit

of it. There it is staring you in the face on the title-page!' 'You want to thrust in ever so much priestcraft under a good revolutionary name.' 'Well, did not we warn you of it? Did we not profess that our intended something was quite different from what your Owenish Lectures meant?' This is the fair play which English people like, and which will save us from a number of long prefaces, paraphrases, apologetical statements which waste time when one wants to be getting to business."[1]

Again, in a letter to Dr. Jelf, the Principal of King's College, he writes:—

"We did not adopt the word 'Christian' merely as a qualifying adjective. We believe that Christianity has the power of regenerating whatever it comes in contact with, of making that morally healthy and vigorous which apart from it must be either mischievous or inefficient. We found from what we know of the working-men in England that the conviction was spreading more and more widely among them that Law and Christianity were merely the supports and agents of Capital. We wished to show them both by words and deeds that Law and Christianity are the only protectors of all classes from the selfishness which is the destruction of all. So far as we can do this we are helping to avert those tremendous social convulsions which, as recent experience proves, may be the effect of law-

[1] *Life of F. D. Maurice*, vol. ii. pp. 34, 35.

less experiments to preserve property as well as of violent conspiracies against it."[1]

One further quotation I will give in concluding this chapter which seems to me to throw a special light upon Mr. Maurice's sociological method. That method, as I have said, was a direct logical inference from his theological creed. He could never endure, therefore, any teaching which seemed to imply that society *ought not to be* built up on the selfish and competitive instincts of mankind, for it was of the essence of his Christian faith to believe that *it was not.* God's order *was* founded on mutual love and fellow-help. Selfishness and competition were the direct results of man's disorder. Human society he held to be a Divine creation. He could not therefore tolerate any method or system which seemed to imply that it was man's business to construct some new and improved form of society, rather than to assume that the existing form of society, with its divinely created obligations, was the best, if men could only pay reverent homage to those obligations.

This principle comes out very clearly in the characteristic letter which he wrote to protest

[1] *Life of F. D. Maurice*, vol. ii. p. 92.

against what seemed a very harmless proposal, to secure unity of action between the various co-operative societies by the formation of a central board. But the proposer of the scheme had told Mr. Maurice that the organization of the central board was *necessary* to curb the thoroughly mercenary, selfish, competitive spirit of the individual associations. This to Mr. Maurice implied a fatal desertion of the root principle of Christian Socialism, and he immediately wrote to Mr. Ludlow, "prophesying against this central board as if it were the work of the Evil One".

"This is the doctrine of a man whom you believe and I believe to be one of the honestest and noblest specimens of the English Socialist school. Now, do I complain of him for believing in this power of organization to make sets of men with an evil moral purpose good and useful? Certainly not. It is part of the creed which has grown with his growth and strengthened with his strength. It must be the hardest thing in the world for him to throw it off. Nor do I believe that he does really hold these men in whom he takes so earnest an interest to be the mere devils he describes them as being! I believe no such thing. I am certain he knows that there are higher, truer impulses and desires with them, and that these are leading them to co-operation and brotherhood in spite of all the selfishness which is

drawing them asunder. But the more I entertain this conviction the more solemnly am I bound not to confirm him in what I ever have held and do now hold to be a lie, the more am I bound to bear witness for that truth which is at work in his mind, and which must work itself out then if he is really to help his brethren out of bondage into freedom. If I join his 'Central Board', I say, he teaches me to say, 'my purpose is to turn a number of wavering forces, each seeking the other's destruction, into harmony, by certain scientific arrangements of mine concerning production and consumption'. Now what I have said, and so long as I have breath in my body, hope to say, is this—'I acknowledge in these wavering creatures an element of peace and harmony, the work of God's spirit. To that I speak in each of them. I can speak to nothing else. If the Son of Peace be there my peace will rest upon them: if not, it will return to me again. I have no hope of entering into terms of peace with the devil. I have no notion that I can make him my servant by a mere ingenious and extensive combination. I believe the more skilful and large the combination of such elements the worse and the more deadly will be the result.' Talk as much as you like about putting the hand to the plough and drawing back; I never put my hand to *this* plough. I have put my hand to another from which I should draw back at once and for ever if I tolerated by any word or act the maxim which Sully distinctly avows, and upon which he rests the necessity of a central board. Talk as much as you like about my

systemphobia. It is this which I mean by system, it is this which I have hated in the church, the state, the family, the heart, and which I see coming out more fearfully every day—the organization of evil powers for the sake of producing good effects . . . . *God's order seems to me more than ever the antagonist of man's systems: Christian Socialism is in my mind the assertion of God's order.* Every attempt, however feeble, to bring it forth I honour and desire to assist. Every attempt to hide it under a great machinery, call it organization of labour, central board, or what you like, I must protest against as hindering the gradual development of what I regard as a divine purpose, as an attempt to create a new constitution of society, when what we want is that the old constitution should exhibit its true functions and energies. . . . To guide and to govern is not my business; I am ashamed to think that you should, any of you, allow the notion in your minds that it is. Sganarelle might be beaten into a doctor, but Christopher Sly could only be made a king when he was drunk. I am not quite drunk, and I don't want to be a king, though I am thankful to claim to be one of a family of kings and priests, and am bound to assert the authority of the true King, by whom, and not by central boards, associations are prevented from breaking into atoms. And in His name, and in assertion of His rights, I will, with God's help, continue to declare in your ears, and in the ears of the half dozen who are awake on Sunday afternoons, that no Privy Councils, National Councils, or Oecu-

menical Councils ever did lay, or ever can lay, a foundation for men's souls and God's Church to rest upon. That is what I said in my sermon. I did affirm distinctly that Christ had used councils and might use them when and how He pleased, as He may, for aught I know, construct central boards for the management of trade fraternities. But I do say that neither the council nor the central board can make the fraternity, or establish the law or principle of it, and if we build churches upon the decrees of councils, or associations upon decrees of central boards, we build upon the sand, and that when the rain comes our houses will fall, and that great will be the fall of them."[1]

[1] *Life of F. D. Maurice*, vol. ii. pp. 42–45.

Chapter II.

A Poet, his Birth and Environment.

"And Nature, the old nurse, took
The child upon her knee,
Saying, here is a story-book
Thy Father has written for thee.
'Come wander with me,' she said,
'Into regions as yet untrod,
And read what is still unread
In the manuscripts of God.'
And he wandered away and away
With Nature, the dear old nurse,
Who sang to him night and day
The rhymes of the universe.
And whenever the way seemed long,
Or his heart began to fail,
She would sing a more wonderful song,
Or tell a more wonderful tale."

—LONGFELLOW.

"I believe God intended Kingsley to be, above all, a poet. I believe that in some of his poetry he rises higher than in all his prose, ay, to the level of his greatest contemporaries. I believe that since Shakespeare, there has been no such Shakespearean promise as that of *The Saint's Tragedy*." So wrote Mr. J. M. Ludlow a year or two ago in the pages of the *Economic Review*. And although, perhaps, we must allow something for the glamour of youthful memories in an old friend, there can

be little doubt, I think, of the truth of the first sentence. Charles Kingsley was essentially and before all things a poet. A richer, more sympathetic nature could hardly be conceived. He had, moreover, the heredity of a poet, and in early years he had the natural environment calculated to stimulate a poetic nature.

Of a family belonging originally to Cheshire, but settled for many generations in Hampshire, Charles Kingsley was born in 1819, at Holne Vicarage, in Devonshire, "under the brow of Dartmoor", thus inhaling, so to speak, with his first breath, the daring spirit of the men of Devon, whose deeds of adventure and bravery he was afterwards to picture so graphically for his countrymen in the pages of *Westward Ho!* "I am", he was always proud to say, "a West-countryman born and bred." His father, at that time vicar of Holne, was a man of cultivation and refinement, a country gentleman, in fact, by birth and habit, a clergyman by force of circumstance, but none the less a faithful parish priest, a lover of art, a keen sportsman, a good linguist, an ardent student of nature, "a man", as his son said of him, "possessed of every talent except that of using his

talents". His mother was a remarkable woman. She was the daughter of Judge Lucas of Barbados, a man both of action and books. He was the friend of Lord Rodney, and had taken part with him in the great naval fight off S. Lucia in 1782. He was the friend, too, of John Hunter and Sir Joseph Banks, and in old age the tales which he could tell of the old war-days on the Spanish main, and his stories of the wonders of tropical nature, became the delight of his grandson's boyhood, and gave a colour probably to all his after-life. But it was from his mother that Charles Kingsley no doubt directly inherited his enthusiastic poetic nature. It is said of her that, although in later life of "a quite extraordinary practical and administrative power", she was in earlier days full of poetry and imaginative sentiment. In faith that the impressions made on her own mind before the birth of the child for whose coming she longed, would be mysteriously transmitted to him, Mrs. Kingsley luxuriated in the romantic surroundings of her Devonshire home—the scenery of Holne and Dartmoor, the chase, the hills, the combes, the river—and gave herself up to every sight and sound which she hoped would be dear to her

child in after-life. Her hopes, we know, were fully realized.

And if Charles Kingsley had a true poet's mother, he had also in early life a true poet's environment. When Charles was only five years old, his father had moved from Devonshire to the living of Barnack, in Northamptonshire. Here the next six years of his boyhood were passed, amid all the weird, mysterious beauty of the great Fenland. The charm of it remained with him all through his life. Forty years afterwards, lecturing at Cambridge on the drainage of the Great Fen which had turned a "waste howling wilderness" into a "garden of the Lord", it is still with a certain touch of pardonable sadness that he recalls the picture as it had been indelibly stamped upon the impressionable mind of his boyhood.

"The fancy may linger without blame (he said in 1867) over the shining meres, the golden reed-beds, the countless water-fowl, the strange and gaudy insects, the wild nature, the mystery, the majesty—for mystery and majesty there were—which haunted the deep fens for many hundred years. Little thinks the Scotsman, whirled down by the Great Northern Railway from Peterborough to Huntingdon, what a grand place, even twenty years

ago, was that Holme and Whittlesea, which is now but a black, unsightly, steaming flat, from which the meres and reed-beds of the old world are gone, while the corn and roots of the new world have not as yet taken their place. But grand enough it was, that black, ugly waste, when backed by Caistor highlands and Holme Wood and the patches of the primeval forest: while dark-green alders and pale-green reeds stretched for miles round the broad lagoon, where the coot clanked and the bittern boomed, and the sedge-bird, not content with its own sweet song, mocked the notes of all the birds around; while high overhead hung motionless hawk beyond hawk, buzzard beyond buzzard, kite beyond kite, as far as eye could see. Far off, upon the silver mere, would rise a puff of smoke from a punt invisible from its flatness and white paint. Then down the wind came the boom of the great stanchion gun: and after that sound another sound, louder as it neared; a cry as of all the bells of Cambridge and all the hounds of Cottesmore; and overhead rushed and whirled the skein of terrified wild-fowl, screaming, piping, clacking, croaking —filling the air with the hoarse rattle of their wings, while clear above all sounded the wild whistle of the curlew and the trumpet note of the great white swan. They are all gone now. No longer do the ruffs trample the sedge into a hard floor in their fighting rings, while the sober reeves stand round, admiring the tournament of their lovers, gay with ruffs and tippets, no two of them alike. Gone are ruffs and reeves, spoonbills, bitterns, avosets; the very snipe,

one hears, disdains to breed. Gone, too, not only from the Fens, but from the whole world, is that most exquisite of butterflies—*Lycæna dispar*,—the Great Copper, and many a curious insect more."[1]

Such was the picture of the great Fenland as it impressed itself upon his childish mind, a land of weird and strange beauty, hidden in rising mist, or suffused in the golden afterglow of sunset, a picture which appears again and again in the pages of his books, in the prelude to *Hereward the Wake*, in the chapter of *The Hermits* which is devoted to the history of S. Guthlac, and above all in that most poetic of all his prose idylls, the Cambridge *Lecture on the Fens*, from which I have quoted the above passage.

But if the impressions of nature which he had gathered as a child from the scenery of the East Anglian Fens were deep and lasting, the impress of the rich and wild coast scenery of North Devon and the West of England would seem to have been even deeper. His life there was that of a boy, not of a mere child. And whether in his father's house at Clovelly, or at school at Clifton or Helston, the "west country" became to him that dearest of all memories, the home of a happy boyhood.

[1] *Prose Idylls*, pp. 95, 96.

It was at Clovelly—to the rectory of which his father had moved in 1830—that Kingsley first came into touch with all the vigorous life and the manly qualities of a seafaring people. Here he learnt to appreciate that spirit of adventure and romance which characterized the fisher-folk of the Devon and Cornish coasts, and not less to respect that quiet simplicity and godly piety which is nourished in the hearts of men who win their daily bread in the face of death and danger. Here, too, most probably, he learnt that power of personal popularity, born of his own innate *bonhomie* and unaffected nature, but cherished also by the fact that in early life he lived among the sons of toil on terms of natural equality and simple human dignity, which stood him in such good stead in later days when dealing with the Chartist and democratic workmen. Of Charles Kingsley, in this respect, we may say, as the poet Lowell says of Agassiz:

"His magic was not far to seek;
He was so human! Whether strong or weak
Far from his kind he neither sank nor soared,
But sate an equal guest at every board:
No beggar ever felt him condescend,
No prince presume: for still himself he bare

At manhood's simple level, and where'er
He met a stranger, there he left a friend."

Certainly his six years' experience in this seaboard parish coloured all his after-life. As a companion picture to that of the Fen Country we may quote this description of a scene on the Devon coast from that same volume of *Prose Idylls*:—

"A sudden turn of the clouds let in a wild gleam of moonshine upon the white leaping heads of the breakers, and on the pyramid of the Black Church Rock, which stands in summer in such calm grandeur gazing down on the smiling bay, with the white sand of Braunton and the red cliffs of Portledge shining through its two vast arches; and against a slab of rock on the right, for years after discoloured with her paint, lay the ship, rising slowly on every surge to drop again with a piteous crash as the wave fell back from the cliff and dragged the roaring pebbles back with it under the coming wall of foam. You have heard of ships at the last moment crying aloud like living things in agony? I heard it then as the stumps of her masts rocked and reeled in her, and every plank and joint strained and screamed with the dreadful tension. . . ."[1]

And again another Clovelly scene which ends thus:—

[1] *Prose Idylls*, p. 291.

"Hardly an old playmate of mine but is drowned and gone.

> Their graves are scattered far and wide,
> By mount, by stream, and sea.

One poor little fellow's face starts out of the depths of memory as fresh as ever, my especial pet and birds'-nesting companion as a boy—a little, delicate, precocious, large-brained child, who might have written books some day if he had been a gentleman's son: but when his father's ship was wrecked they found him, left alone of all the crew, just as he had been lashed to the rigging by loving and dying hands, but cold and stiff, the little soul beaten out of him by the cruel waves before it had time to show what growth there might have been in it."[1]

In 1832 Charles Kingsley was sent to the Helston Grammar School. Mr. Derwent Coleridge, the then head-master, writes of him as being at that time "a tall slight boy, of keen visage, and of great bodily activity, high-spirited, earnest, and energetic, giving full promise of the intellectual powers and moral qualities by which he was afterwards distinguished. Though not a close student, he was an eager leader and inquirer, sometimes in very out-of-the-way quarters."[2] And his school-fellow and lifelong friend, Mr. Powles, afterwards tutor of Exeter College,

[1] *Prose Idylls*, p. 293. [2] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 16.

Oxford, tells us that the "vehement spirit, the adventurous courage, the quick and tender sympathy that distinguished the man's entrance on public life were all in the boy". Nevertheless he was not popular as a schoolboy. "He knew too much, and his mind was generally on a higher level than ours. He did not consciously snub those who knew less, but a good deal of unconscious snubbing went on, all the more resented perhaps because it was unconscious."[1] This judgment of Mr. Powles, written many years afterwards, I confess, does not read quite like an accurate transcript from memory. It seems much more probable, and much more in harmony, at anyrate with average schoolboy habit, to find the cause of unpopularity in Kingsley's exceptional cultivation of the study of natural history and, to the schoolboy, eccentric behaviour in preferring stupid walks in search of botanical specimens to the school games and sports, in which Kingsley, although strong and active, was never an expert. "He liked nothing better than to sally out, hammer in hand, and his botanical tin slung round his neck, on some long expedition in quest of new plants, and to investigate the cliffs within a few miles of Helston."[1] His passion indeed for natural

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. pp. 14, 15.

science, thus early in life, attests itself plainly enough, comically so, in some of his boyish letters and scraps of verse.

In 1836, when his father had moved up to London, to the rectory of Chelsea, Kingsley was entered as a day-student at King's College, and after a two-years' course there, was entered at Magdalen College, Cambridge, where he soon gained a scholarship, and came out first in the May examinations in both classics and mathematics. His undergraduate career from the academic point of view was not brilliant. In that respect it differed indeed little from that of many a distinguished Cambridge man—Macaulay, Thackeray, Tennyson—of whose future success in life and literature the university class lists give no indication. Possibly there is something instinctively repulsive in the competitive system of the university to the man of poetic genius or literary gift. His life at Cambridge was undoubtedly one of "storm and stress". The period was one of much religious and political excitement. The Chartist agitation was in full force. Strange views, wild fancies were fermenting in the minds of all, especially of the young, with a force which Kingsley not long afterwards aptly enough compared

to "yeast". The Tractarian movement also was stirring the mind of the university at Cambridge little less than at Oxford. It was little likely therefore that Kingsley should escape the doubts and disturbances of belief which are apt to beset such a mind as his, perhaps every thinking masculine mind as it emerges into manhood. Kingsley's letters, at this time at anyrate, bear witness to the bitterness of this mental struggle. His religious faith was wavering. His soul was shaken to its depths by doubt and difficulty. He could read little. He went in for excitement of every kind—boating, hunting, driving, fencing, boxing, duck-shooting in the fens—anything to deaden thought. More than once he had nearly resolved to leave Cambridge, and go out to the Far West and live as a wild prairie hunter. So little in those dark days did he dream of the work which God had kept for him to do.

In the summer of 1839 he had met the lady who was to be his wife. She was the youngest daughter of Mr. Pascoe Grenfell, M.P. Three of her sisters were afterwards married to men of high distinction; one to Mr. Carr Glyn, afterwards Lord Wolverton, one to the Rev. Lord Sydney Godolphin

Osborne, the "S. G. O." of the *Times*, and one to James Anthony Froude, the historian. "On the 6th of July," says Mrs. Kingsley, "Charles and his future wife met for the first time." "That was my real wedding day," he said some fifteen years afterwards. No one can read Kingsley's letters, written at this time, when the new friendship—"from the first more of a recognition than an acquaintance"—was ripening into intimacy, when "counsel was asked and given, and all things in heaven and earth discussed", without feeling how much he owed for the disciplining of character, for the deepening of spiritual life, for the broadening of intellectual life, to the woman whom he loved. Happy indeed was the man who found such a woman for a friend, such a friend for a lover. Two months of close intercourse passed away only too quickly, and although from this time during the next four years the friends met but seldom, a new life had evidently dawned for both, which neither absence nor sorrow, difference of religious opinions, opposition of friends, nor adverse circumstances could extinguish. In a characteristic letter to his mother, written in 1841, we can read plainly enough how "the course of true love" was

running: "Do not, dearest mother, make yourself unhappy about Fanny and me. I am young and strong . . . and she will be strong too. Have no fears for us; we can wait and endure and dare, and be happy beyond the grave, if not on this side."[1] When such was the spirit of their courtship, no wonder that after thirty years of happy life together the wife could sum up the story of their love in the simple words she placed on the white cross above his grave: "Amavimus, Amamus, Amabimus".

Her influence on Charles Kingsley's mind is to be seen upon almost every page of his writings, for amid their manly strength and vigour there is a continual underflow of tenderness and sweetness which tells its own tale of a womanly inspiration. Miss Grenfell was a year older than her husband, and at this time certainly she was more mature in feeling, more disciplined in character, of deeper culture, and more widely read. It was she who first introduced him to the works of Coleridge, Carlyle, and Frederick Maurice, the three writers who did most to mould the general bent of Kingsley's mind during the earlier part of his career. His

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 56.

wife testifies that Carlyle's *French Revolution* did much to "establish and intensify his belief in God's righteous government of the world", and Carlyle's writings generally were evidently a significant factor in Kingsley's intellectual development. Wide as the poles asunder in many things, Kingsley and Carlyle had yet marked characteristics in common. Both writers had, in fact, much of the spirit of the old Crusaders about them. They both thought of themselves as

> "sent forth upon the field of life
> To war with evil",

and having once convinced themselves that evil was the dragon against which they had to tilt, they both rushed to the charge with a vehemence which was certainly somewhat unregenerate in character. Of Kingsley in this *en sabreur* mood, a picturesque writer, the late Mr. W. R. Greg, has not perhaps very unjustly said:[1]

"He reminds us of nothing so much as of a war-horse panting for the battle; his usual style is marvellously like a neigh—a 'ha! ha! among the trumpets'; the dust of the combat is to him the breath of life; and when once, in the plenitude of grace and faith, fairly let loose upon his prey

[1] *Literary and Social Judgments*, vol. i. p. 146.

—human, moral, or material—all the Red Indian within him comes to the surface, and he wields his tomahawk with an unbaptized heartiness, slightly heathenish, no doubt, but withal unspeakably refreshing".

But if in Carlyle's writings was laid the groundwork of Kingsley's intellectual development at this time, it was in Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection*, and still more in Maurice's *Kingdom of Christ*, that he found the speculations and principles which had the most abiding influence on his after-life and thought.

Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* came to him as a revelation of the new force of spiritual insight. Coleridge was, in fact, a great interpreter of spiritual philosophy. He regarded Christianity not merely as a means of salvation in any limited evangelical sense, but as a perfect philosophy, giving at once the true explanation of the facts of our spiritual being, and the true remedy for their disorder. His distinctive work was to vindicate the rationality of religion by showing on the one hand the essential divinity of man, and, on the other, the rationality of the higher life of man's spirit. And Kingsley assimilated this doctrine. It is the germinal principle of much of his own public teaching,

both in the realm of theology and of natural science. It may be traced all through his writings, but especially perhaps in his treatment of such lectures as those on the *Platonic Schools of Alexandria*, in such papers as that on "Natural Theology", delivered at Sion College in 1871, and subsequently published as the preface to his *Westminster Sermons*. It was, however, to Maurice's *Kingdom of Christ* that Kingsley always said he "owed more than to any other book he had ever read". This work had come to its second edition in 1842. It is prefaced by a long dedication to Kingsley's old Helston schoolmaster, Derwent Coleridge, in which Maurice explains his own theological debt to the system of Christian philosophy taught by Samuel Taylor Coleridge. Miss Grenfell sent the book to Kingsley a few months after his leaving Cambridge. It evidently made the deepest impression upon him, helping to clear his views and to establish his faith.

In January, 1842, Kingsley took his degree at Cambridge with some distinction. In both classics and mathematics he took honours. In classics he was ninth in the first class. His position, however, in the mathematical class-list—39th senior optime

—was evidently attained with some difficulty, and was merely the qualification, at that time required by the university, for candidature in classical honours. His tutor Dr. Bateson, afterwards Master of S. John's College, says of him: "His degree was a good one, but I must add that it was nothing compared with what might have been attained by a man of his powers. If he had worked as an undergraduate with only a small portion of the industry and the energy which he exhibited after he left Cambridge, there was no academic distinction that would not have been within his reach."[1] That Kingsley had any taste for pure mathematics we may well doubt, not only on the evidence of his comparatively low position in the mathematical class-list, but also from the record of an incident in his examination, which was much talked of at the time, and has passed into the traditionary schools' gossip of the university.

"'Describe the Common Pump', was a question in the paper on Mechanics. Of the internal machinery of the pump Kingsley was unable to render a scientific account, but of the outside his vivid imagination supplied a picture which his facile pencil soon transferred to paper. Under the heading 'Describe a Pump' he drew a grand village pump

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 58.

in the midst of a broad green, and opposite the porch of an ancient church. By the side of the pump stood, in all the pomposity of his office, the village beadle with uniform and baton. Around were women and children of all ages, shapes, dress, and sizes, each carrying a crock, a jug, a bucket, or some vessel, large or small. These were drawn with considerable power, and the whole was lighted up with his deep vein of humour: while around the pump itself was a huge chain, padlocked and surrounded by a notice: 'This pump locked during Divine Service'. This Kingsley sent up to his examiner as his answer to the question. I know not whether he got any marks for it: but it was so clever that the moderator of the year had it framed and hung up on the wall of his room."[1]

Chapter III.

The Country Parson and Village Problems.

"Parson do preach and tell me to pray,
And to think of our work, and not ask more pay;
And to follow plough-share, and never think
Of crazy cottage and ditch-stuff's stink—
That Doctor do say breeds ager and chills,
Or worse than that, the fever that kills—
And a' bids me pay my way like a man,
Whether I can't or whether I can;
And as I han't beef, to be thankful for bread.
And bless the Lord it ain't turmuts instead;

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 62.

And never envy the farmer's pig,
For all a' lies warm, and is fed so big,
While the missus and little uns grow that thin,
You may count their bones underneath the skin;
I'm to call all I gets 'the chastening rod'
And look up to my betters and then thank God."

PUNCH.

In July, 1842, Charles Kingsley was ordained, and then at the age of twenty-three settled down as curate of Eversley, little thinking that it was to be his home for thirty-three years. He married in 1844, and shortly after was appointed to the rectory of the parish.

Eversley had been anything but a model village. In the days of the French war, when smuggling was the most lucrative of trades, the wild Eversley moors were one of the regular smugglers' routes to London, and the older men in their day had all either smuggled or connived at smuggling—depots of spirits, French silks and laces being hidden away among the gorse and bracken. And if the village in those days had not been a model one, neither had been its squire. He had been a boon companion of the Prince Regent, a fox-hunter of the old school, a strict game preserver, a five-bottle man. Both the man and his establishment had been a simple curse to the neighbourhood. Such were the evil traditions of the place.

Kingsley at once set to work, and soon began to win his way with the people. Old reprobate smugglers and poachers, who for years had never darkened the doors of the church, felt tempted to come and hear the young parson, who could hit so straight and so hard, who told them the plainest truths in the plainest language. And having once come they came again. Moreover it was not only in the pulpit that the young parson could hit hard. The young wild fellows in the parish were not long in discovering that the parson, if only he chose to exert his power, was their superior in physical, as well as in intellectual skill.

Here no doubt was one great secret of his influence as a country parson, at least in such a place as Eversley. It meant much in revelation of personal character,—and personal character, after all, is the secret of influence, whether for philosopher or peasant,—that the rector could swing a flail with any thresher in the barn, turn a swathe with any mower in the meadow, or pitch hay with any labourer in the field. The huntsman or the poacher could feel the reality of the parson's sympathy, when they found he knew as well as they did the earth of every fox on the moor, or the

"reedy hover" or the "still hole" of the pike and chub in the river. The farmer thought not the less, but the more, of the rector's sermons because he knew he could also talk sensibly of the rotation of crops and the breed and feed of stock. There was no lack, we may be sure, of earnestness and zeal in the ordinary routine of parochial work in a country village,—clubs, schools, mothers' meetings, loan funds, lending library, night classes, singing classes, village lectures,—but there was also a complete and wholesome absence of the stiff and starched clerical officialism, which in his day, and perhaps since, has so often marred the honest work of many a good country clergyman who, as Kingsley himself once said, allowed his people too readily to find out "where the man left off and the parson began".

Kingsley was indeed a true parish priest—caring for his people's best welfare, sparing no effort in their behalf, a most regular and conscientious visitor in their cottages, personally intimate with every soul in his parish, from the men and boys at their field work to the women at their wash-tubs and the babies in their cradles. "If a man or woman"—so his wife records—"were suffering or dying, he

would go to them five and six times a day, and night as well as day, for his own heart's sake as well as for their soul's sake."

In his pulpit also the same spirit was visible. When he went up for his priest's orders, Dr. Sumner, the then Bishop of Winchester, objected to the sermons which he showed to him as being "too colloquial". "It was this very peculiarity", says Mrs. Kingsley, "which arrested and attracted his hearers, and helped to fill a very empty church." There were those even who thought that this colloquialism almost verged on profanity, and to whom the incessant recurrence of the Holy name in Kingsley's writings was distasteful. "God's work", "God's world", "God's feast", "God's heroes", "God's bells", "good news of God"—were expressions, they thought, which, just and fitting enough when sparingly and solemnly used, produce by their constant recurrence an almost profane effect on certain minds. But such criticism is as foolish as it is unfair. For it must ever be remembered that with Kingsley such expressions were strictly the result of his intensity of feeling, of his sincere religious feeling that no work of God is too small to be spoken of, and no work of the

devil too homely to be denounced. Every thought, every action, every circumstance had for Kingsley a very real spiritual import. He scouted indignantly, passionately, always, that half-faith of some Christians which could separate the things secular from the things spiritual, and the things of everyday life from the things of God, Life from Religion.

As an instance of this intensity of faith, and of his directness of appeal to his village congregation, take this extract from one of the earliest of his village sermons[1]:

"Cunning, fair-spoken oppressor of the poor, has not thy sin found thee out? Then be sure it will. In the shame of thine own heart it will find thee out;—in the curses of the poor it will find thee out;—in a friendless, restless, hopeless death-bed, thy covetousness and thy cruelty will glare before thee in their true colours, and thy sin will find thee out!

"Profligate woman, who art now casting away thine honest name, thy self-respect, thy womanhood, thy baptism-vows, that thou mayest enjoy the foul pleasures of sin for a season, has not thy sin found thee out? Then be sure it will hereafter, when thou hast become disgusted at thyself and thine own infamy, — and youth and health and

[1] *Twenty-five Village Sermons*, p. 70.

friends are gone, and a shameful and despised old age creeps over thee, and death stalks nearer and nearer, and God vanishes further and further off, then thy sin will find thee out!

"Foolish, improvident young man, who art wasting the noble strength of youth and manly spirits which God has given thee in sin and folly, throwing away thine honest earnings in cards and drunkenness, instead of laying them by against a time of need, has not thy sin found thee out? Then be sure it will some day, when thou hast to bring home thy bride to a cheerless unfurnished house, and there to live from hand to mouth—without money to provide for her sickness—without money to give her the means of keeping things neat and comfortable when she is well, — without a farthing laid by against distress and illness and old age: — then your sin will find you out: then perhaps my text and my words may come across you, as you sigh in vain in your comfortless home, in your impoverished old age, for the money which you wasted in youth! My friends, my friends, for your own sake consider and mend ere that day come, as else it surely will.

"And lastly, you who, without running into any especial sins as those which the world calls sins, still live careless about religion, without loyalty to Christ the Lord, without any honest attempt or even wish to serve the God above you, or to rejoice in remembering that you are his children, working for Him and under Him,—be sure your sin will find you out. When affliction, or sickness, or dis-

appointment come, as come they will if God has not cast you off;—when the dark day dawns, and your fool's paradise of worldly prosperity is cut away from under your feet, then you will find out your folly; you will find you have insulted the only friend who can bring you out of affliction—forgotten the only knowledge which will enable you to be wiser for affliction. Then, I say, the sin of your godlessness will find you out; if you do not intend to fall, soured and sickened merely by God's chastisement, either into stupid despair or peevish discontent, you will have to go back to God and cry, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before Thee, and am no more worthy to be called Thy son'.

"Go back at once before it be too late. Find out your sins and mend them—before they find you out and break your hearts."

It was during Kingsley's first year as rector of Eversley, in July, 1844, that his admiration for Maurice's published books induced him to write to that great teacher, asking for his advice, apologizing for intrusion. "But where", he added, "shall the young priest go for advice but to the elder prophet? To your works I am indebted for the foundation of any coherent view of the Word of God, the meaning of the Church of England, and the spiritual phenomena of the present and

past ages. And as through your thoughts God's Spirit has given me catholicity, to whom therefore can I better go for details on any of these points?"

This letter led to a correspondence and a friendship which was only dissolved by death. To Maurice, "My dear—my dearest Master!" was Kingsley's habitual mode of address. There was no exaggeration in this. Maurice was the prophet, Kingsley the disciple, in some respects also the interpreter, able to popularize by his more poetic and glowing sympathies the profounder message of his friend. In this connection, as illustrative of the peculiar personal charm which Maurice exercised, not only over Kingsley, but over all who came within the range of his influence, these characteristic words of Kingsley are interesting:

"The most beautiful human soul, whom God has ever in His great mercy allowed me most unworthy to meet with on this earth; the man who of all men I have seen approached nearest to my conception of S. John, the Apostle of Love. Well do I remember, when we were looking together at Leonardo da Vinci's fresco of the Last Supper, his complaining almost with indignation of the girlish and sentimental face which the painter, like too many Italians,

had given to S. John. I asked why? And Maurice answered, 'Why? Was not S. John the Apostle of Love? Then, in such a world of hate and misery as this, do you not think he had more furrows in his cheeks than all the other apostles?' And I looked upon the furrows in that most delicate and yet most noble face, and knew that he spoke truth—of S. John and of himself likewise; and understood better from that moment what was meant by bearing the sorrows and carrying the infirmities of men."[1]

This attitude of discipleship towards Maurice continued to the end. In the next chapter we shall have to deal with the intimate relationship of the two men in connection with the Christian Socialist movement. Meanwhile it was under Maurice's immediate patronage that Kingsley's first book was published. This was *The Saint's Tragedy*, a poetic drama dealing with the thirteenth-century story of S. Elisabeth of Hungary. Ever since his first going down into Devonshire, after taking his degree, Kingsley had been working at this story in one form or another. It was published in 1848, with an introduction by Mr. Maurice. It made little impression at the time on the general literary world, though it was eagerly read at Oxford, fiercely at-

[1] *Life of Frederick Denison Maurice*, vol. ii. p. 554.

tacked by the High Church party, and somewhat extravagantly praised by Baron Bunsen.

This latter writer was so impressed by its dramatic power that in a letter to Mr. Max Müller he expressed the hope that Kingsley might undertake the task of continuing the series of Shakespearean historical plays. "I have", he said, "for several years made no secret of it, that Kingsley seems to me the genius of our country called to place by the side of that sublime dramatic series, from King John to Henry VIII., another series from Edward VI. to the landing of William of Orange. This is the only historical development of Europe which unites in itself all vital elements, and which we might look upon without overpowering pain. The tragedy of 'Saint Elisabeth' shows that Kingsley can grapple, not only with the novel, but with the more severe rules of dramatic art."[1]

I am afraid the poet himself had a truer appreciation of the limitations of his own power.

"I never wrote", he says in one of his letters, "five hundred lines in my life before *The Saint's Tragedy*, . . . and I have not read

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 151.

half enough. I have been studying all physical sciences which deal with phenomena. I have been watching nature in every mood; I have been poring over sculptures and paintings since I was a little boy, and all I can say is, I do not know half enough to be a poet in the nineteenth century."[1]

Anyhow *The Saint's Tragedy* never became popular in the ordinary sense of the word. The story is too repugnant to popular feeling. The language in which it is written was, as his mentor, Mr. Maurice, says in the preface to the drama, "a little too bold for the taste and temper of the age". And the social problems with which its author endeavoured to grapple in his poem were so powerfully pressed upon his own spirit that they left him with none of the calmness or serenity of mind which seem necessary for the production of a truthful or consistent work of imagination such as a great Shakespearean tragedy. Indeed, the drama is mainly interesting because of its unconscious revelation of the hopes and dreams and ideals of a young and ardent soul yearning for truth and love. Reading it by the light of his biography, one cannot avoid the conviction that in following its various

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 186.

scenes we are watching the mental struggles and aspirations of its author, that Walter and Conrad and the heretic preacher were very real personages to the curate of Eversley, and that in some way — dim, unacknowledged, idealized — he has associated his future wife with the sweet picture of the "dear Elisabeth". Indeed there is even a suspicion, in one scene in the second act when the individualistic abbot discourses of "that self-interest of each which produces in the aggregate the happy equilibrium of all", that we are hearing echoes, not from the thirteenth century, but from some Ruridecanal Chapter in the nineteenth, where during a heated discussion on "charity organization" some young Christian Socialist vicar had used wild words about "simpering clerical philanthropists aping the artless cant of an aristocracy who made them, use them, and despise them". Certainly the master-note of his heroine's character in dealing with the social problems of her day is the master-note of his.

"Be earnest, earnest, earnest; mad if thou wilt:
Do what thou dost as if the stakes were heaven,
And that thy last deed ere the judgment day.
When all's done, nothing's done. There's rest above—
Below let work be death, if work be love."

Of the man himself as he was at this time, earnest of purpose, keen of sympathy, impetuously generous, nobly self-sacrificing, quixotic, chivalrous, stern to all forms of wrong and oppression, stern, above all, to himself, gentle and tender and pitiful to weakness as one who lived always in the presence of God, there is no more vivid picture than that painted for us in the letter[1] by Mr. John Martineau, an old pupil in the Eversley rectory, during the most strenuous of the years in which Kingsley was working at the problems of village and town life.

It was in the autumn of 1848 that Kingsley's first, and in some respects his ablest, novel came out in the pages of *Fraser's Magazine*. *Yeast*, a story of village life and labour problems, is a powerful representation of the seething state of rural society in the middle of the nineteenth century, and as such will probably always continue to be a favourite with young students of social philosophy; but it can never be popular with the mere novel reader, for, notwithstanding its many brilliant descriptive passages,—the fox-hunting scene in an early chapter is one of the

[1] See p. 297 of vol. i. of the *Letters and Memories*.

most vivid pictures in this line in all literature, and the love scenes between Lancelot and Argemone are in their tenderness and truth, to say the least, worthy of "the poet-squire" who was their author,—and notwithstanding the powerfully-drawn character of the real hero of the book, the Cornish gamekeeper Tregarva, the novel, after all, as a novel must be judged not to be a great work of art by a consummate artist, but a political pamphlet, written at white heat, and with uncompromising earnestness, by a great spiritual teacher, by a very real, though perhaps minor, prophet. It was obviously never Kingsley's ambition, then or afterwards, to be a great novelist. He wished to be considered always as a teacher, or as nothing; as a Christian priest, to quote his own words, "as a man, to whom are superadded his Christianity and his priesthood". But then the Christian priest was also a genius and a poet, and so his keen sympathy for suffering humanity, his appreciation of the wrongs of the village poor, which his experience as a hard-working country parson forced on him, give a vivid intensity to words of bitterness and truth which his countrymen did not easily forget, or in some cases forgive.

In a preface to the fourth edition of *Yeast*, written twelve years after its first publication in *Fraser's Magazine*, Kingsley speaks of the improved tone and temper which, during the interval, has grown up in the agricultural districts with regard to all the details of village reform. There is greater self-help and independence among the labouring men as the result of "the twelve years more of the New Poor Law". The country gentry are learning more and more their responsibilities as leaders of agricultural progress. The younger generation of farmers are adding to the "strong sense of justice and the vast good nature" of their fathers a steadily increasing knowledge of what is required of them both as "manufacturers of food and employers of human labour".

"The country clergy, again, are steadily improving. Would (however) that we clergymen could learn (some of us are learning already) that influence over our people is not to be gained by perpetual interference in their private affairs, too often inquisitorial, irritating, and degrading to both parties, but by showing ourselves their personal friends, of like passions with them. Let a priest do that. Let us make our people feel that we speak to them, and feel to them, as men to men, and then the more cottages we enter the better. If

we go into our neighbours' houses only as judges, inquisitors, or at best gossips, we are best—as too many are—at home in our studies. Would, too, that we would recollect this—that our duty is, among other things, to preach the Gospel; and consider firstly whether what we commonly preach be any Gospel or good news at all, and not rather the worst possible news; and secondly, whether we preach at all; whether our sermons are not utterly unintelligible (being delivered in an unknown tongue), and also of a dulness not to be surpassed; and whether, therefore, it might not be worth our while to spend a little time in studying the English tongue, and the art of touching human hearts and minds."

Nor does Kingsley fail to see that something of this generally improved tone in village administration is due to a change in the political ideas of the country, to the triumph of liberal principles for which the Whig party had been fighting for the last forty years.

"England had become Whig; and the death of the Whig party is the best proof of its victory. It has ceased to exist, because it has done its work; because its principles are accepted by its ancient enemies; because the political economy and the physical science, which grew up under its patronage, are leavening the thoughts and acts of Anglican and of Evangelical alike, and supplying them with methods for carrying out their own schemes.

Lord Shaftesbury's truly noble speech on Sanitary Reform at Liverpool is a striking proof of the extent to which the Evangelical leaders have given in their adherence to those scientific laws, the original preachers of which have been called by his Lordship's party heretics and infidels, materialists and rationalists. Be it so. Provided truth be preached, what matter who preaches it? Provided the leaven of sound inductive science leaven the whole lump, what matter who sets it working? Better, perhaps, because more likely to produce practical success, that these noble truths should be instilled into the minds of the educated classes by men who share somewhat in their prejudices and superstitions, and doled out to them in such measure as will not terrify or disgust them. The child will take its medicine from the nurse's hand trustfully enough, when it would scream itself into convulsions at the sight of the doctor, and so do itself more harm than the medicine would do it good. The doctor meanwhile (unless he be one of Hesiod's 'fools, who know not how much more half is than the whole') is content enough to see any part of his prescription got down, by any hands whatsoever."

The characteristic chivalry of Kingsley comes out in the last paragraph of this preface. *Yeast*, like all the books he has written, was written to tell the English labouring man, the English workman, of his national birthright.

"But it is not this book, or any man's book, or any man at all, who can tell Esau the whole truth about himself, his powers, his duty, and his God. Woman must do it, and not man. His mother, his sister, the maid whom he may love; and failing all these (as they often will fail him, in the wild wandering life which he must live), those human angels of whom it is written — 'The barren hath many more children than she who has an husband'. And such will not be wanting. As long as England can produce at once two such women as Florence Nightingale and Catherine Marsh, there is good hope that Esau will not be defrauded of his birthright; and that by the time that Jacob comes crouching to him, to defend him against the enemies who are near at hand, Esau, instead of borrowing Jacob's religion, may be able to teach Jacob his; and the two brothers face together the superstition and anarchy of Europe, in the strength of a lofty and enlightened Christianity, which shall be thoroughly human, and therefore thoroughly divine."

There is little plot in *Yeast*. It has for hero, a devout and dashing fox-hunter, "an unlicked bear with sorrows before him", carrying a copy of Francis de Sales' *Devout Life* in his pocket when he rides to hounds; for heroine, "the very model from which Raphael might have conceived his glorious Catharine", a squire's daughter, a graceful ascetic, a ritualistic devotee, feeling herself

the destined instrument of the hero's conversion; for chorus, a crowd of country gentlemen, parsons, sportsmen, landlords, farmers, labourers, poachers; and for leader of the chorus, the gamekeeper, "a stately, thoughtful-looking Cornishman, some six feet three in height, with thews and sinews in proportion", a village reformer, agitator, socialist, poet. Such are the dramatis personæ of this very fragmentary story. The essence of the book is concentrated in the fierce lyric on the game-laws, written by the gamekeeper Tregarva, and called "The Bad Squire".

"There's blood on your new foreign shrubs, squire,
There's blood on your pointer's feet,
There's blood on the game you sell, squire,
And there's blood on the game you eat.

You have sold the labouring man, squire,
Body and soul to shame,
To pay for your seat in the House, squire,
And to pay for the feed of your game.

You made him a poacher yourself, squire,
When you'd give neither work nor meat,
And your barley-fed hares robbed the garden
At our starving children's feet;

When, packed in one reeking chamber,
Man, maid, mother, and little ones lay:

While the rain pattered in on the rotting bride-bed,
And the walls let in the day.
. . . . . .

Our daughters with base-born babies
Have wandered away in their shame;
If your misses had slept, squire, where they did,
Your misses might do the same.

Can your lady patch hearts that are breaking,
With handfuls of coals and rice,
Or by dealing out flannel and sheeting
A little below cost price?"

Here we have, by implication, most of the burning questions of rural politics—the reform of the game-laws, the housing of the rural poor, the question of insanitary cottages, village morality, indiscriminate and unthoughtful charity. And Tregarva can speak as forcibly in plain prose as in poetry. "Day labourer born, day labourer live, from hand to mouth, scraping and grinding to get not meal and beer even, but bread and potatoes; and then, at the end of it all, for a worthy reward, half a crown a week of parish pay—or the workhouse. That's a lively hopeful prospect for a Christian man."

"'What makes me maddest of all, sir,' he exclaims, 'is to see that everybody sees these evils except just the men who can cure them—the squires

and the parsons. . . . The parsons are afraid of the landlords. They must see these things, for they are not blind; and they try to plaster them up out of their own pockets. . . . And as for the charitable great people, sir, when they see poor folk sick or hungry before their eyes, they pull out their purses fast enough, God bless them!—for they would not like to be so themselves. But the oppression that goes on all the year round; and the want that goes on all the year round; and the filth, and the lying, and the swearing, and the profligacy that goes on all the year round; and the sickening weight of debt, and the miserable grinding anxiety from rent-day to rent-day, and Saturday night to Saturday night, that crushes a man's soul down, and drives every thought out of his head but how he is to fill his stomach, and warm his back, and keep a house over his head, till he daren't for his life take his thoughts one moment off the meat that perisheth—oh, sir, they never feel this, and therefore they never dream that there are thousands who feel this, and feel nothing else.'"

The author of *Yeast* himself, however, had no heroic remedies to offer for all these sad problems. He believed in the working of reformatory tendencies in men, gradually bringing about practical results in the work of the individual or the state. It was his business to guide these tendencies and aims

by stating forcibly the data of the problem. "In homely English", he said, "I have given my readers *Yeast*; if they be what I take them for, they will be able to bake with it themselves."

There were few critics of the book, however, at that time who were able to accept Kingsley's own view of its purport and aim. It was too repugnant to all the customs and prejudices of the time. Its author was rather regarded as a mischievous firebrand whom it behoved all right-minded and loyal Englishmen manfully to withstand. One anonymous critic in the pages of the *Guardian* published a violent attack upon the teaching of *Yeast* as subversive of the very principles of Christianity, as mere heathenism, pagan morality, and rationalistic infidelity. In proof of this he did not hesitate to garble sentences, to misquote, to twist, to contort. The attack was so grossly insulting, so obviously unfair, that Kingsley found it necessary to reply. He did so in words which are worth quoting, not only because of their force and directness, but because they contain a confession of his faith and his loyalty to the Church, which throws a light on all his subsequent teaching and writing.

"The reviewer", he said, in a letter to the editor of the *Guardian*, "makes certain allegations against me which I found it somewhat difficult to answer, from their very preposterousness, till in Pascal's *Fifteenth Provincial Letter* I fell on an argument which a certain Capuchin Father, Valerian, found successful against the Jesuits, and which seems to suit the reviewer exactly. I shall therefore proceed to apply it to the two accusations which concern me most nearly as a Churchman.

"(i.) He asserts that I say that 'it is common sense and logic to make ourselves children of God by believing that we are so when we are not'. Sir, you and your readers will hardly believe me when I tell you that this is the exact and formal opposite to what I say, that the words which he misquotes, *by leaving out the context and the note of interrogation*, occur in a scornful *reductio ad absurdum* of the very doctrine which he wantonly imputes to me, an appeal to common sense and logic *against* and not *for* the lie of the Genevan school. I have a right to use the word 'wantonly', for he cannot say that he has misunderstood me: he has refused to allow me that plea, and I refuse to allow it to him. Indeed, I cannot, for the passage is as plain as daylight, no schoolboy could misunderstand it: and every friend to whom I have shewn his version of it has received it with the same laughter and indignation with which I did, and felt with me, that the only answer to be given to such dishonesty was that of Father Valerian, '*Mentiris impudentissimé*' (Thou liest most unblushingly).

"(ii.) So with the assertion that the book regards the Catholic Doctrine of the Trinity as the same thing with that of the Vedas, Neoplatonists, etc., etc., or considers a certain amount of youthful profligacy as doing no real and permanent harm to the character—perhaps strengthening it—for a useful and even religious life; and that the existence of the passions is a proof that they are to be gratified! Sir, I shall not quote passages in proof of these calumnies, for if I did, I should have to quote half the book. I shall simply reply, with Father Valerian, '*Mentiris impudentissimé*'.

". . . But one thing I may say, to save trouble hereafter, that *whosoever henceforth, either explicitly or by insinuation, says that I do not hold and believe* ex animo, *and in the simple and literal sense, all the doctrines of the Catholic and Apostolic Church of England, as embodied in her Liturgy and in her Articles, shall have no answer from me but Father Valerian's* 'Mentiris impudentissimé'."[1]

More direct, outspoken confession of faith it is impossible for anyone, whether clergyman or layman, to make. And to that confession Kingsley adhered throughout his life.

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 283.

Chapter IV.

Lessons in Village Citizenship.

"The church bells were ringing, the devil sat singing
On the stump of a rotting old tree;
'Oh faith it grows cold, and the creeds they grow old,
And the world is nigh ready for me'.
The bells went on ringing, a spirit came singing,
And smiled as he crumbled the tree;
'Yon wood does but perish new seedlings to cherish,
And the world is too live yet for thee'."

[Eversley, 1848.]

To a rural reformer looking back upon the social and economic history of the English village during the fifty years which have elapsed since the publication of *Yeast*, it is plain that considerable progress has been made. But very much yet remains to be done, and to be done in directions which for the most part Charles Kingsley very definitely foresaw.

Broadly speaking, the problems in rural administration which still face the village reformer may be classed under three heads.

I. How to increase village prosperity by improved methods of livelihood.

II. How to improve the housing of the rural poor, and the sanitary equipment of the village.

III. How to inspire through the whole system of rural administration worthier ideals of village citizenship.

Possibly this last problem ought to be considered first. But at anyrate we may say this. It is quite idle for the potential village reformer to consider the solution of any one of these problems until he has first also satisfactorily to his own mind answered these three questions:—

I. Does the English state consider that production of food for the people is the primary charge on the land, and with that object in view does she desire to retain a rural population of workers on the soil?

II. Does the English Church consider that national character is of far greater importance than national wealth, and from that point of view is she prepared to welcome the revival of an English yeoman class as one of the surest means of building up a sturdy, wholesome, religious national character?

III. What is the legitimate civic ideal of the English peasant of the future to be?

Until we have settled these questions satisfactorily it is evidently idle to go further. What, for example, is the use of all these various and conflicting schemes of the Technical Training Committees of the County Councils up and down the country, if we

have not first made up our minds as to the special object of all our training? The peasant proprietor, or the small farmer of the future —if we decide that the creation of such a class is to be our national aim—will need a very different training from that of the wage-earning farm-hand of the present: for small farming, remember, is a lost art in England.

I. That Kingsley saw vividly enough one aspect of this question is plain from a letter which is quoted on page 360 of vol. ii. of his *Letters and Memories*:—

"I have as a practical agriculturist interested myself much for twenty-five years (this letter was written in 1871) in the small farm question, and I think your friend may depend on what I tell him. . . . He must remember that the French and German peasants who own or rent little farms have long hereditary skill in agriculture, which the English artisan has not. He must remember also that the crops which they raise per acre are miserably small compared to those on a large English farm,—I speak from the sight of my own eyes,—and that an immediate result of breaking up the present farms into little allotments would be to diminish the food-producing powers of this realm at least one-half.

"For a single fact, the small farmer could never fat a single bullock; and English beef would disappear from the market, its place being taken (as

in France and Germany) by veal—the calves being killed to save the expense of rearing.

"He must also remember—what I assure him—that the foreign peasant in the north lives far worse than a good English labourer. Meat he never tastes or white bread. Black rye bread and pottage is his staple food, and his wife, from early field work, becomes a haggard old woman at twenty-five. God forbid that I should ever see in England such wives and mothers as are common on the Continent. . . . As it is, were I a land-owner, I should certainly try this experiment. I should let some four to five acre lots to the very ablest labourers at the usual low farmer's rent, on the condition that they would spade and fork, not plough, and give them all fair play. But if a town artisan came to ask me for a similar bit of land, I would say: Come in, my good fellow, and eat and drink with me, and go your way back to your own trade. For if you settled down on this bit of land, you would be either in the workhouse or the grave in twelve months, and the land a wilderness. And if he were a sensible man I would make him see that I was right."

"Back to the Land!" a cry which was so popular a few years ago with the Radical land reformers of the town clubs, would evidently have met with little sympathy from Charles Kingsley; and rightly so. And yet no man was more keen to see such a development of agricultural science and rural industry

as should make possible a large increase in the numbers of the labouring population subsisting on the land. But he knew the conditions of the problem. He knew that a revolution in the direction of the continental system of peasant properties was no true need of England, for that system, to say no more, does not make for civilization or progress. In a lecture delivered in London shortly after the publication of *Yeast*, on "The Application of Associative Principles and Methods to Agriculture", he spoke of the two great needs of rural society as being (1) the application of scientific methods to agriculture and village industries, and (2) the adoption of a system of co-operative distribution. After an interval of fifty years they still remain so.

Of more scientific methods of distribution some little has been learnt even in rural districts. The co-operative village store is steadily and surely spreading throughout England. And the rural labourers who for the most part manage these stores are gradually learning in the committee work of store management, and by contact at their annual meetings with the business men of their own class, who are the managing directors of the Co operative Wholesale Societies in London and

Manchester, something of the future possibilities of the principle of co-operation, both in developing village industries, and also in putting the village producers into touch with the town markets. Even the farmer in some parts of England is slowly awakening to the value of the co-operative principle in the organization of dairy and cheese factories, and to the necessity for the adoption of newer methods if he is to compete successfully for the custom of the English townsmen with the rapidly-increasing number of foreign and colonial producers of farm produce.

But especially the revivification of village life in England flags for want of specific knowledge and training both in the sciences of life and the arts of livelihood.

Of all the countless parliamentary blue-books which the many Royal Commissions on the Condition of the English Rural Poor have produced, I think perhaps the most valuable of the century is the report published two years ago by the Recess Committee, of which Mr. Horace Plunkett was the chairman, dealing with the question of a proposed Department of Agriculture and Industries for Ireland. It consists of reports and correspondence from delegates sent out by the

committee to investigate various industries on the Continent, and to report how far continental methods might be utilized for the prosperity of Ireland. But for the most part the very remarkable continental experience which is tabulated in that report is just as applicable to England as to Ireland, and the final deduction from that experience is just this, that rural prosperity is within the reach of every English village that will equip itself for the industrial conflict. It will be sufficient to quote only one paragraph from that report:—

"Dr. Steinbeis found his country (Würtemberg) steeped in poverty when he first entered the public service in 1840. Half a century later, Sir Henry Barron, the British Minister at Stuttgart, writes as follows:—'England now buys from Würtemberg large quantities of manufactured articles, such as blankets, carpets, flannels, hosiery, linens, tissues, instruments, types, drugs, chemicals, paper, ivory goods, wood carving, toys, furniture, hats, pianos, gunpowder, clocks, and stays'. . . . It is to be noted especially that these industries are carried on by an agricultural population, who forty years ago were devoid of all mechanical knowledge, and also in taking to these industries have by no means abandoned agriculture, but on the contrary have found their agriculture prosper through the growth of a manufacturing population in their villages. Mr.

Tylor describes the prosperity of Würtemberg in these words: 'Thirty years ago Würtemberg was in a deplorable condition. Since then Dr. Steinbeis, by means of technical schools, local and central exhibitions, by training industrial teachers, by transplanting trades from other countries, has converted a population without mechanical knowledge into one carrying on most of the small trades practised in Europe. This has helped the agricultural interest much, it has provided a manufacturing population close to the farmer.' Again, the Director of the Royal Bank of Stuttgart writes:—'To-day there is not a pauper in the kingdom of Würtemberg'. In the midst of the depression of trade and industry which affected all Europe in 1886 the British Minister reported:—'the prosperity of the nation and well-being of the masses have suffered no interruption . . . no real depression exists here'."

Had England listened to Charles Kingsley in 1850, as Würtemberg listened to Dr. Von Steinbeis, possibly the English villager of to-day might have been as free from poverty as his Bavarian brother.

II. Again, take another administrative problem of village government—the housing of the rural poor and the improvement of village sanitation—to which Charles Kingsley called attention, not only in the vivid pages of *Yeast*,

but in the many lectures and addresses which followed, in "The Massacre of the Innocents", his speech at the inauguration of the Ladies' Sanitary Association; in his address on "The Air Mothers", in which he advocated the teaching of the rudiments of the science of health in our public schools and colleges; in his "Sermons on the Cholera", in which he declared that outbreak to be "the expression of God's judgment, God's opinion, God's handwriting on the wall against us for our sins of filth and laziness, foul air, foul food, foul drains, foul bedrooms"; in the notable address on "Human Soot" on behalf of the Liverpool Ragged Schools; and in all the "crusade against dirt, degradation, disease, and death" which during the next twenty years he regarded as "a sacred duty".

Certainly if the health conditions of the cottage homes of England to-day are better than they were fifty years ago, it is very largely owing to the work and teaching of Charles Kingsley, and the little band of sanitary reformers, his personal friends—Dr. Southwood Smith, Mr. Edwin Chadwick, Sir John Simon, Sir Arthur Helps,—who won for England the Public Health Act of 1848, and the various amending acts which from time to

time followed it, down to the very year of Kingsley's death, when in 1875 the Act of Consolidation was passed, which made sanitary questions an imperial subject, and thus finally gained from the State the acknowledgment that the preservation of the health and life of the people was a public duty.

Yet progress in sanitary reform has been very slow. Eight years after Kingsley's death I remember in my examination before the Royal Commission on the Housing of the Poor, laying before the Commissioners certain vital statistics with regard to village homes in the midland counties, which led me, as a country parson striving to do my work as far as possible in the spirit which I had learnt from Kingsley, to ask these questions:—"How is it possible under such physical conditions for a country parson to expect from his parishioners any approach to that 'pure religion breathing household laws' which it is yet his duty to inculcate? How, with mere huts for homes, can the distinctively home virtues—parental love, filial obedience, household thrift, cleanliness, modesty, chastity, self-respect, purity and simplicity of heart—find any room for growth? Can he honestly ascribe the meagre growth of these

virtues among his people solely to failure of individual will, or must he not rather trace it to circumstances of life, and sleep so degrading as to leave no moral room for their growth? What provision can there be under such conditions of home life, not only for the three essentials of physical life—pure air, pure water, pure food,—but also for the three essentials of spiritual life, 'admiration, hope, and love'?". I wrote those words in 1883. And still, after the elapse of fifteen years more, the conditions are very little improved. It would be possible to quote many pieces of evidence in proof of this. Let me be satisfied with quoting two. The first is the evidence of a vicar in my own county of Cambridge, a county councillor and the chairman of a parish council.

"I was two years in getting a block of houses condemned, although they had no back-door, consequently no through ventilation, no window in bedroom, consequently again no ventilation or light, and the floor of the living-room inches below the outside surface, and no drainage. A poor old woman, since dead, pointed out to the sanitary medical and the inspector her ingenious contrivance for conducting the soaked-in water under the fireplace, and how she 'deeved', as she expressed it, the water out with a scoop into a pail, and showed

the sacks on the floor saturated with stagnant water. There is still one bedroom at least without window, and possibly more. The thatch is rotting, and the rain comes freely in, though this is being remedied a little now, by the rotten thatch, stinking as it is, being covered up by a thin layer of new straw in patches. A couple of open ditches run from one end of the village to the other, generally 3 feet deep of the filthiest liquid imaginable.

One house at least has the closet about 3 feet from the back-door, and had at least 200 gallons of five-year-old night-soil in an uncemented hole, whose surface was a foot at least above the living-room floor. . . . Most of the cottages are provided with non-fitting doors. Many without through ventilation and back-doors. Thirteen with one bedroom; 44 with two, including several places under stairs. Not much overcrowding—children die off and prevent it. . . . I have been ten years at it, and the only result is a little new thatch here and there and the condemnation of seven houses. It seems hopeless. My efforts have left me solitary, and I am almost constrained to cease efforts at fighting the wind." "I enclose a piece of sacking taken to-day from a cottage hearth, and describe its sanitary condition. Tenant, a widow and invalid son, both with chronic colds. Living-room, through broken drain at back, soaked with water all along one side to a height of 2 ft. 9½ in. Water flows to hearth on which enclosure was laid. Hearthrug completely wet. Fireplace falling out, no cooking arrangements whatever. Bedroom on floor too

damp to sleep in. Loft over used as bedroom. Floor actually 3 in. away from wall that should support it. Tenants dare not walk on that side. Light hole: All the light that can get in is through a hole 10 sq. in. in superficial area, and does not open.

Outside conditions: A drain leading from the parson's W.C. cesspool past the village pump (catching through an untrapped grid on which the villagers' pails stand while being filled) is broken in just opposite this house, and the contents flow on the ground within 10 feet of the front door and unused bedroom of this house. A heap of reeking manure, some five or six tons, stands within the same distance of front door and window. No back door, only the front door gives ingress and egress to the house. Owner, a magistrate and D.L. Rent has been paid. Tenant in receipt of parish relief, 1*s.* per week and half stone bread—all she, a widow, has to live upon. Invalid son has not worked for years, has heart disease; 2*s.* 6*d.* per week from club, 1*s.* from union."

And the second piece of evidence is this. It is taken from the official summary of Mr. Little, the Special Agricultural Commissioner, printed in the lately published Report of the Royal Commission on Labour:—

"There is abundant evidence", he says, "to show that a large proportion of the cottages inhabited by labourers are below a proper standard of what is

required for decency and comfort, while a considerable number of them are vile and deplorably wretched dwellings. . . . It is impossible to read these reports without experiencing a painful feeling that too frequently and too commonly the agricultural labourer lives under conditions which are physically and morally unwholesome and offensive; the accommodation provided in respect of the number, size, and comfort of the rooms, the sanitary condition and the water supply, is lamentably deficient generally, and requires amendment. The action of the local sanitary authority, though vigorous in some districts, is in many places ineffective, and it is everywhere impeded, and sometimes arrested, by the knowledge that the owners of insanitary dwellings have not the means to remedy the defects, and that the consequences of closing such dwellings would be to make the present inhabitants homeless."

When we come to ask ourselves how we shall set about remedying this state of things, so discreditable to our civilization, we are forced to acknowledge that it is not entirely the law which is to blame. The Public Health Act of 1875, the Housing of the Working Classes Act of 1890, and the Parish Councils Act of 1894 ought to be quite sufficient to grapple with most of the evils.

It is the motive force, in an enlightened

public opinion in the various localities, to set these Acts in motion which is too often absent.

How shall this more sensitive public conscience be created?

I think a study of Charles Kingsley's life and teaching would teach us to answer that question in some such way as this.

Christ came to give us life, and to give it more abundantly. Here, then, is an obvious duty laid upon the Church, which claims to be His interpreter of life to the people.

It is for her to exhibit the practical religion of citizenship by creating and fostering such a public opinion as shall overcome the supineness, the ignorance, the apathy, the sluggish indifference of too many of the existing sanitary authorities. And when, for example, she hears, as she will hear, for it is the common burden of all the squires, that "good cottages cannot be built to pay", that, as Lord Salisbury stated not so long ago, only two-thirds of the cost of cottage building can be considered a commercial investment, and that the remaining third must be regarded as a charity and a benevolence on the part of the landlord, then I venture to say that it will be the Church's duty to take up its burden of prophecy and

declare that if a landlord finds it commercially profitable to provide, as part of the necessary working plant of his estate, healthy stables and cow-sheds for the proper housing of his farmer's cattle, but commercially unprofitable to provide healthy cottages for the labourers who are necessary to the work of the farm, then we have reached a social state in which the worth and the value of a beast is more considered than the worth and the value of a man, and it is idle to talk any more of either citizenship or practical religion, for the time has evidently come for revolution! Thus speaketh the Lord of Hosts, saying: Is it a time for you, O ye who dwell in your ceiled houses that the houses of God's poor should lie waste? Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood and build houses for My poor, and I will take pleasure in them, and I will be glorified, saith the Lord. . . . Woe unto him that buildeth for himself a wide house and large chambers and cutteth him out windows, and ceileth it with cedar and painteth it with vermilion, but forgetteth to judge the cause of the poor and needy. Shall I not visit for these things? saith the Lord: shall not My soul be avenged on such a nation as this?

III. Lastly, in view of the experience of rural administration during the last fifty years, there is a further lesson to be learnt from Charles Kingsley's example and teaching, if we would see the growth in our villages of a worthier ideal of village citizenship.

And it is a lesson, in the first instance at anyrate, for the country parson. When from the village pulpit he is performing the Church's prophetic function of interpreter of Life, he must so learn to speak to his people that they shall come to feel it a point of honour and of Christian obligation to build up, as far as their influence extends, the life of the civic brotherhood to which they belong, the corporate life of the village, in justice, righteousness, and the fear of God.

Charles Kingsley made such teaching effective, because at the heart of every sermon he preached on national patriotism or civic duty was to be found this principle which he had learnt, as so many of his followers have learnt since, from the teaching of Frederick Maurice:—

Jesus Christ by His incarnation exalted human nature, consecrated all human relations, claimed supremacy over all realms of human thought and action, founded an ideal

spiritual kingdom to be a storehouse of redemption, social no less than personal, for ever.

For every loyal Christian, therefore, using the daily prayer of his Lord, "Thy kingdom come . . . on earth", Christ must be acknowledged as the supreme King of all village government, and Christ's law recognized always as the ultimate authority in the realm of village ethics, village politics, village economics. For, after all, it is this doctrine of our faith which will best create in the citizen that true sense of individual responsibility, strengthening him to resist the tyranny of a majority, habituating him to live for an unseen and distant end, which is so necessary to counter-work that impatience for quick results and legislative short-cuts which must ever remain one of the great dangers of a democratic electorate.

Again, the parson's teaching of civic duty should be saturated with the emotion of patriotism. If, in the litany of the Church, the village priest expects his people to join with him in any real sense in the suffrage: "O God, we have heard with our ears, and our fathers have declared unto us the noble works that Thou didst in their days and in the old time before them", he must surely instruct his

people in those "noble works"; he must not be ashamed to take his text occasionally from the national Bible, from the books that tell of England's divine genesis and exodus, from her records of judges and heroes, her chronicles of kings and poets and prophets; he must strive to bring home to the hearts of the people the sense of the sacredness of national life, and the greatness and continuity of our country's story, as part of the design of God. Practical citizenship will not be less practical, but more so, if it can appeal reasonably to the ideal emotion of patriotism.

"They must be free or die, who speak the tongue
That Shakespeare spake: the faith and morals hold
Which Milton held."

But the capable citizen will not be formed only by imbibing principles, however ideal, from the pulpit teaching of his parson. He must be trained in the practical school of village politics.

In old days that school was, for the village, the parish vestry, or it ought to have been so. To-day it is the Parish Council. There in the active business of responsible public life, if they are to be learnt at all, must be learnt those primary lessons in public justice and self-government, in public discussion and

civic duty, which are necessary to the character of a capable citizen. How does the country parson, then, regard the work of the new parish councils?

In the majority of cases, I trust, up and down the country, in the experience of the last three or four years, the village parson has loyally accepted the new Act, and has set himself to help his people, his labouring parishioners especially, to take their due part in the nation's work, and to forward all wise measures for the well-being of the village community. But it is to be feared that there are also far too many instances in which the parson, especially if he himself is not an elected member, or has not been invited to the chairmanship of the council, affects either a supreme indifference to the whole business of village government, or stands aloof watching with complacent amusement the ineffective bungling which of course is apt to characterize the first effort of untrained political tyros. "The English agricultural labourer", he says, by way of justification of his attitude, "is not yet fit for self-government. If he would only believe it, he is a thousand times better off under the benevolent paternal despotism of the squire and parson."

But the parson, surely, of all men, ought to know that the end of government, even of village government, is not to exhibit a model community, in the sense of a perfectly smooth-working political machine, but to develop human beings, to train character, to make men—men with souls, for whom Christ died. And—it is as old as Aristotle—"the harper is not made otherwise than by harping, nor the just man otherwise than by doing just deeds". Citizenship is only a larger art. And if you would teach men to do their duties to the State, the only finally effective plan is to give them duties to do. Men can only become fit to have votes by first using them. Personal responsibility in citizenship requires at least for its development that modicum of opportunity which the parish franchise supplies.

One thinks one knows how Kingsley would have welcomed such a measure of rural reform as the new Parish Councils Act, not indeed as likely to bring what our American friends call "millennium by express", but as giving opportunity for the free play of the best democratic forces of the time, and leading on, one would hope, to the gradual revivification of village life in England.

And the country parson who, in Kingsley's

spirit, would wish to be a true village leader, and whose religion teaches him that the veriest day-drudge in his village has a worth in the eye of God which is seldom adequately measured by human standards, will not hesitate to begin with the elementary political right of the parish franchise. Recognizing, as he must do, as an educated man, the dangers in a democratic state of society of subdivided power, —and subdivided power means of course subdivided responsibility,—and knowing the fatal paralysis of individual character which all too swiftly follows the blight of indifference, he will never suffer, if he can help it, even that fraction of subdivided power, the simple duty of the vote, to be lightly regarded by any of his parishioners. At the time of a parish election, therefore, or of a parliamentary election, although it should be no part of the public duty of the parson to give his parishioners advice as to how they shall cast their votes, it should undoubtedly be a part of the public duty of the parson to give them advice as to the spirit in which they should cast their votes. It should be his duty, his distinct duty, to remind his people that the vote is given to them by the State on the understanding that they will exercise it, not

to serve any private interest of their own, but entirely for what they honestly consider to be for the public good. He should point out to them, therefore, that to neglect to record their vote when the right time comes, or to give their votes carelessly and without serious thought, much less to sell them for money or favour, would be an act of treason to their country; nay, that it would be more, that it would be an act of treason to Christ Himself, for not to act according to conscience in such matters would be practically to deny Christ's claim to be King of Men, the Ruler over every department of life and action, in contrast with the domination of capital, class, party, or sect. Better, he ought to say to them, better that you should support the wrong cause conscientiously than the right cause insincerely. Better be a true man on the wrong side than a false man on the right. The Quaker poet of Democracy was not wrong when he said:

"No jest is this,
One vote amiss
May blast the hope of freedom's year.
O take me where
Are hearts of prayer,
And foreheads bowed in reverent fear;

Not lightly fall
Beyond recall
The written scrolls a breath can float:
The crowning fact,
The kingliest act
Of freedom, is the free man's vote."

Chapter V.

"Politics for the People."

The Day of the Lord is at hand, at hand:
  Its storms roll up the sky:
The nations sleep starving on heaps of gold;
  All dreamers toss and sigh;
The night is darkest before the morn;
When the pain is sorest the child is born,
  And the Day of the Lord at hand.

. . . . . .

Who would sit down and sigh for a lost age of gold,
  While the Lord of all ages is here?
True hearts will leap up at the trumpet of God,
  And those who can suffer can dare.
Each old age of gold was an iron age too,
And the meekest of saints may find stern work to do,
  In the day of the Lord at hand.

(Torridge, 1849.)

On the 10th of April, 1848, a revolution was threatened in England. One hundred thousand armed men were to meet on Kennington Common, and from thence to march to Westminster, there to compel, by physical force, if necessary, the acceptance of the People's Charter by the Houses of Parliament. The revolution had been carefully prepared, as it was supposed, by ten years of steady agitation. At the close of 1837—a year of bad harvest and of serious commercial crisis—a public meeting had been convened by the

London Working-men's Association, at which a drastic reform of parliament had been demanded. A petition was drafted and signed by some 3000 people. In its final shape it was published on May 8, 1838, as the People's Charter. It contained "six points": or, practically, five, for IV. in its form of equal electoral districts had been dropped. They were these:

I. Universal suffrage.
II. Abolition of property qualification for members of Parliament.
III. Annual Parliaments.
IV. Equal representation.
V. Payment of M.P.'s.
VI. Vote by ballot at elections.

These "six points" were almost identically the same as the demands formulated sixty years previously by Charles James Fox in his Whig programme. To-day, fifty years later, a full century of political agitation being more than complete, and five out of the "six points"—the vote by ballot alone excepted—being still unwon, the propositions of the People's Charter seem no more unreasonable, not to say dangerous or revolutionary, than the items of the latest of Radical programmes. Such, however, was not the feeling in the spring of 1848. The Revolution in France,

the predial disturbances in Ireland, the undoubtedly wide-spread distress among the working population in the manufacturing districts of the north, which had already led during the winter to riots in Glasgow, Edinburgh, and Liverpool, gave point to the fears of those who were responsible for civil order. The Government filled London with troops, put the Duke of Wellington in command, barricaded the bridges and Downing Street, garrisoned the Bank of England, closed the Horse Guards. The troops, however, were wisely kept out of sight. The impression created by the ready enrolment of more than 150,000 London householders as "special constables", combined with the bombastic boast of French and Irish assistance on the part of the Physical-force Chartists, naturally persuaded the sensible English workman of the wisdom of staying indoors. On Kennington Common the expected 100,000 men rapidly dwindled to a rabble of reckless partisans and foolish zealots, who were left with thieves and roughs and hobbledehoys "to cheer for the revolution". The Chartist leader, Feargus O'Connor, an irresponsible Irish rhetorician, acted with the irresolute weakness common to his class in face of

superior force. Torrents of rain completed the fiasco. And the day which had dawned with all the possibilities of a great national tragedy, closed in burlesque and "inextinguishable laughter". Charles Kingsley has thus described the final scene in one of the last chapters of *Alton Locke*:—

"The sun had risen on the tenth of April. What would be done before the sun had set?" (asks the Chartist hero of that book). "What would be done? Just what we had the might to do; and, therefore, according to the formula on which we were about to act, that mights are rights, just what we had a right to do—nothing. Futility, absurdity, vanity and vexation of spirit. . . . It is a day to be forgotten—and forgiven. . . . Every one of Mackaye's predictions came true. We had arrayed against us, by our own folly, the very physical force to which we had appealed. The dread of general plunder and outrage by the savages of London, the national hatred of that French and Irish interference of which we had boasted, armed against us thousands of special constables who had in the abstract little or no objection to our political opinions. The practical common-sense of England, whatever discontent it might feel with the existing system, refused to let it be hurled rudely down on the mere chance of building up on its ruins something as yet untried and even undefined. Above all, the people would

not rise. Whatever sympathy they had with us, they did not care to show it. And then futility after futility exposed itself. The meeting, which was to have been counted by hundreds of thousands, numbered hardly its tens of thousands; and of them a frightful proportion were of those very rascal classes against whom we ourselves had offered to be sworn in as special constables. O'Connor's courage failed him after all. He contrived to be called away at the critical moment by some problematical superintendent of police. Poor Cuffy, the honestest, if not the wisest, speaker there, leapt off the wagon, exclaiming that we were all 'humbugged and betrayed'; and the meeting broke up pitiably piecemeal, drenched and cowed, body and soul, by pouring rain on its way home—for the very heavens mercifully helped to quench our folly—while the monster-petition crawled ludicrously away in a hack cab, to be dragged to the floor of the House of Commons amid roars of laughter. . . ."

This description, written a year or so after the Chartist failure, shows that Kingsley was not inappreciative of the futilities and absurdities of the agitation. But that he was profoundly moved at the time cannot be denied. Nor was this unnatural. For if there was much in the conduct of the agitation that was foolish and fanatic, there were also some

claims that were not unfounded, and there were also wrongs real enough and grievous enough to draw the sympathy of any right-hearted Englishman. We have only to read such books as the *Autobiography of a Chartist*, by Thomas Cooper, or the *Corn-law Rhymes* of the Sheffield poet, Ebenezer Elliot, to learn how bitter were the sufferings of large numbers of the working people of England, or why it was that the bread tax had come to be identified in the minds of the very best of the artisans with a system of economic legislation which was distinctly preferential to the interests of a single class. Anyhow it was a profound and passionate sympathy with what he knew of these real sufferings of the poor that caused Charles Kingsley to act and write as he did. Had he written or done otherwise he would not have been Charles Kingsley.

Mr. Ludlow has told us how on that 10th of April he first met Kingsley.[1] He had come from Eversley to see if anything could be done to prevent a collision between the Chartists and the troops. Almost his first words to Ludlow were: "The poor fellows mean well, however misguided; it would be horrible if there were blood shed. I am

[1] *Economic Review*, Oct. 1893.

going to Kennington Common to see what man can do. Will you go with me?"

The two men did not reach Kennington, for at Waterloo Bridge they heard the news that O'Connor had told the people to go home, and that all danger for the moment was over. They turned their steps accordingly to the house of Mr. Maurice in Bloomsbury to tell him the good news. There during the following week, in consultation with the little group of remarkable men who had gathered round Mr. Maurice — Archdeacon Hare, Scott, Ludlow, Charles Mansfield, J. W. Parker, Thomas Hughes,—the lines were laid of that peaceful agitation for the organization of labour, on the principle of association rather than of competition, which came to be known by the name of the Christian Socialist Movement, and which undoubtedly in the latter half of the century has done so much, not only to promote a more brotherly spirit between rich and poor —"the two nations into which", according to the well-known phrase in Disraeli's *Sybil*, "England was divided" — and to create a desire, at least on the part of the more cultured classes, to seek for a more Christian, and therefore more reasonable, solution of the

social and labour problem, but also to foster the growth of the great industrial co-operative societies, whose success promises so much for the industrial future of the country, and points in all probability to the direction in which lies the ultimate solution of the problem of Labour and Capital.

The force and fire of Kingsley soon made him the popular hero of the movement, though Maurice remained from first to last its directing spirit. "If the Oxford tracts did wonders", said Maurice, "why should not we?" He proposed, therefore, a new set of real "Tracts for the Times". Accordingly the first issue of *Politics for the People* was published by Mr. J. W. Parker on May 6th, 1848. In the "prospectus" of its first page, Mr. Maurice defined plainly the principles upon which he and his friends proposed to "consider the questions of the relation of the capitalist to the labourer, of what a government can or cannot do, to find work or pay for the poor".

"To speak of these questions calmly is a duty; to speak of them coldly is a sin; for they cannot be separated from the condition of men who are suffering intensely. If we do not sympathize with their miseries we are not fit to discuss the

remedies which they propose themselves, or which others have proposed for them. That sympathy we desire to cultivate in ourselves and in our countrymen. It will be strongest when it is least maudlin. The poor man wishes to be treated as a brother, not to be praised as an angel. Those who flatter him do not love him.

"Politics have been separated from household ties and affections, from art and science and literature. While they belong to parties, they have no connection with what is human and universal; when they become POLITICS FOR THE PEOPLE, they are found to take in a very large field: whatever concerns man as a social being must be included in them.

"Politics have been separated from Christianity: religious men have supposed that their only business was with the world to come; political men have declared that the present world is governed on entirely different principles from that. So long as politics are regarded as the conflicts between Whig and Tory and Radical; so long as Christianity is regarded as the means of securing selfish rewards, they will never be united.

"But POLITICS FOR THE PEOPLE cannot be separated from religion. They must either start from Atheism, or from the acknowledgment that a living and righteous God is ruling in human society not less than in the natural world. . . . The world is governed by God; this is the rich man's warning; this is the poor man's comfort; this is the real hope in the consideration of all questions, let them be as

hard of solution as they may; this is the pledge that Liberty, Fraternity, Unity, under some conditions or other, are intended for every people under heaven."

The issue of the *Politics* ran through seventeen weekly numbers, and came to an end in July, 1848. In the final number Mr. Maurice frankly confessed that so far as the practical side of the movement was concerned the writers had executed their task very imperfectly. "The great subject of Socialism," he said, "or, in other words, the question, What is the order and constitution of social life? What principles lie beneath all that is merely visible and conventional? we have treated in hints and fragments, rather than formally and directly. Apart from blunders of execution, this has, perhaps, been our greatest mistake. We have not fairly entered upon the subject which we hoped would have been most prominent in our pages, the relation between the capitalist and the labourer."

But if the publication was incomplete in scope and short-lived in duration, it was remarkable not only for the number of distinguished names among its contributors, or rather of names of men who afterwards became

distinguished, but also for its frank discussion of the first principles of social evolution, and for its vigorous denial of the Chartist notion that the greatest and deepest of social evils are those which are caused by legislation, or can be removed by it. The articles are all either unsigned or signed by a *nom de plume*.

In the copy, however, which, through the courtesy of Mr. Bowes of Cambridge, I have been allowed to use, the names of the writers have been inserted in the handwriting of Mr. J. W. Parker, the publisher.

It will be interesting here, I think, seeing that *Politics for the People*, though as a title often quoted, is little known as to its subject-matter, to record the names of these early pioneers of the Christian Social movement in England, and to quote perhaps some characteristic words of those who in the middle of the century "did so much", according to the testimony of one of the foremost social students and reformers in Europe, Professor Brentano, "to bring the Social Evolution of England into a peaceful way". Among the names of the contributors, in addition to Maurice and J. M. Ludlow, who were the "working editors" of the paper, are the following:—Archbishop Whateley,

Archbishop Trench, Bishop Thirlwall of S. David's, Dean Stanley, Professor Conington, Dr. Guy, Charles Mansfield, James Spedding, Daniel Macmillan, A. J. Scott, Lord Sydney Godolphin Osborne, Sir Edward Strachey, Sir Arthur Helps, and Charles Kingsley.

Mrs. Kingsley in the *Memories* speaks of "Old and New: a Parable" as the only poem which Kingsley wrote for the *Politics*, but in my copy I find that Mr. Parker has initialed ("C. K.") three other pieces, two of which, if not strictly "poetic", are at least sufficiently rhythmical and to the point to be worthy of quotation.

OLD SAWS NEW SET.—No. I.

A Greek Fable to an English Moral.

I met John Clod the other day quite out of sorts and pensive,
And grumbling at the government as idle and expensive,
"With taxing food and clothes and light, they've almost broke our backs;
And when shall we poor chaps get back our money's worth, I ax?
I seed upon the paper what a lot we have to pay:
They promises us all reform, but they cart no dirt away.
This government does nothing, sir, I've 'most a mind to riot."

"So had the frogs, friend John," quoth I, "but they got little by it."
"How's that, then?" "Why, these frogs had lived for many a hundred year,
Like jolly old republicans, without distress or fear;
When having grown more civilized, the sapient croakers found,
That all they wanted was a king, just like the nations round.
So for a king they prayed—Jove heard—and kindly tossed a Log
Down out of heaven among them all, and flattened many a frog.
The great unsquashed croaked loyal awe, and swore on bended knees,
To carry out with fire and sword whate'er their king might please:
But his majesty pleased nothing—no! he wouldn't even swear.
To find their dear-bought whistle dumb, was more than frogs could bear.
'A King!' they squalled again. Jove laughed, 'They can't let well alone;
Why, lazy rulers leave at least each man to mind his own;
Well, then, here's something practical,—this government shall work.'
And Iris post from Belgium fetched a patriarchal Stork.
. . . . . .
The Stork surveyed his subjects with a true Malthusian air—
'Ah! over population! There's the mischief, I declare!
The bog will get quite pauperized!' he stretched two yard-long bills,

And sucked down luckless frog on frog, and as he gulped his pills,
'Your individual suffering, my brothers, may be great,
But then, like starving artisans, your suffering feeds the State.'
In vain they shrieked to Jove; 'It's now too late, my friends, to talk;
You've had your choice—you cut King Log, you cannot cut King Stork.'"

Moral.

New brooms sweep clean—but then new boots are apt to prove too tight;
Each party tries its nostrums—if they could but hit the right!
Things might be better, babies know—but then things might be worse.
Reforms are God's own blessings—Revolutions oft his curse.

No. II.

England for the English.

Our demagogues, as wise old Aristophanes may shew,
Are playing just the game they played just two thousand years ago.
"They work", says he, "like seamen when they go to fish for eels;
They stir the mud, and foul the ponds, and so they fill their creels.
For fools, like eels, pop up their heads, whene'er they scent a riot;
And orators in shoals would starve, if once the State grew quiet."

Moral.

Let workmen plead the workmen's cause, and trust no
flatterer's cant,
Hold fast by English fortitude—you'll ne'er need Irish
rant.

There is certainly nothing very inflammatory in poetry such as this. Such merit as it may have savours rather of that robust common sense and homely humour in which the proverbial philosophy of England has always been apt to express itself. Nor in the more academic lines of Professor Conington does the grave severity and seriousness of his muse seem to rebuke unduly the gentle satire of his theme:—

NOTHING POSSIBLE HERE BUT PARLIAMENTARY ELOQUENCE.

Words, words, words, words! O dreamy day,
A day of leaves and not of fruit,
When Truth is smothered in display,
When none will act and all dispute!
O tongue, tongue, tongue! awhile be mute,
And let the hand for once have way!

O endless clash of mind on mind!
Still raising thickest clouds of dust
The eyes of simple folk to blind!
O all ye interests, which must
Be ever, evermore discussed,
Ere aught is done to help mankind!

Oh, Reason once serene and earnest,
  Why leavest thou thy proper uses,
And from the lips of pedants learnest
  Most philosophical excuses
  For all too palpable abuses,
Now, when the people's needs are sternest!

O words! O words! ye are most strong,
  For ye can rear a thickset fence
To bar the view of right and wrong
  From common men's intelligence,
  With sophistry and vain pretence,
And tangled brushwood of the tongue.

O words! O words! yet are ye weak,
  For Truth's indomitable force
Shall through your firmest barriers break,
  With strength as of a mighty horse;
  And those who act shall take their course
O'er the fallen wreck of those who speak.

Altogether, I am not sure that the most revolutionary counsel in the whole of the *Politics* does not come from the pen of an archbishop. At anyrate it may be worth quoting as a practical suggestion for the perplexed politician of to-day. Dr. Whateley writes a spirited "Dialogue between John Bullman and Patrick Kelly on the subject of Repeal", and, *more Hibernico*, puts all the wisdom into the mouth of the Irishman and all the foolishness into that of the English-

man. The Irishman closes the discussion thus wisely:—

"I recommend that Parliament should sit for three weeks or a month every session in Dublin to transact Irish affairs, and that the sovereign should reside a portion of every year, or at least of every two years, in Ireland. . . . If the measure tended, as I am convinced that it would, to tranquillize the country, it would be well worth much more than in fact it would cost. . . . I must confess that I know of no way of at once converting Ireland into a terrestial Paradise. A partial remedy of evils for the present, and a gradual and slow, though steady, improvement in future, is the utmost I could hope from the wisest measures. On the other hand, Repeal would do its work at once. It would speedily cure all the evils complained of, by substituting others ten times greater. But I hope the people of England will not act like a foolish patient who turns with disgust from a prudent and honest physician for not administering violent doses, to a rash or roguish quack, who promises an immediate or complete cure, and brings him to an untimely grave."

I am afraid the story of the last twenty years proves the archbishop to have been as wise in political foresight as he was evidently wanting in skill to "cast" appropriately his dramatic personages. The pen of S.G.O. is both more skilful and more vivid. "Sam

Gorze's Country Letters" remind one of the trenchant power and picturesque style which at a later time made S. G. O.'s letters to the *Times* so weighty a factor in the formation of public opinion on questions of rural politics.

"'I know very well', says John Gristfed to Sam Gorze, 'that much wants mending before we poor working-folk get what we ought to do, and that is, kind treatment from those who get hard work out of us. But, Mr. Gorze, I tell you what I think, that all the charters in the world won't make a bad master good, a hard landlord kind. . . . Let us have power to earn good wages wherever we can get work; let us have decent dwellings wherever we are forced to live: give us power to worship our God on the day he appoints; let us have a chance of rearing our young ones in their duty to Him in Heaven, and to the rulers on earth; and no Chartists will ever drive us to disturb the country by asking for changes which would pull the rich down and make the poor still poorer.

"'Oppress us, defraud us, breed us up on wages that starve the flesh, in dwellings that starve the soul; treat us as beings of a different *order* from the rich, not merely of a different *degree*, and we may be early led to mischief, for discontent will soon breed it. Treat us fairly and kindly, and you may take my word for it, Mr. Gorze, the Queen will never have warmer well-wishers than we of the smock-frock.'"

But, after all, the most characteristic "note" of the *Politics*, both literary and social, was that struck by the articles which bore the signature of "Parson Lot". It had been at a gathering at Mr. Maurice's house of some of the leading contributors to the *Politics* that Kingsley, finding himself in some discussion in a minority of one, said jokingly that he felt much as Lot must have felt in the Cities of the Plain, when he seemed as one that mocked to his sons-in-law. The name "Parson Lot" was then and there suggested and adopted by him as a familiar *nom de plume*. He used it constantly during the succeeding years in *Politics for the People*, *The Christian Socialist*, and *The Journal of Association*, and the numerous tracts and pamphlets published from time to time during the next eight years, of which perhaps "Cheap Clothes and Nasty" is the best known.

Of the articles in the *Politics* three papers on "The National Gallery", full of vivid description and poetic appreciation of art, are printed in full by Mrs. Kingsley in the *Memories*. But of the "Three Letters to Chartists" by Parson Lot in the same publication, it may be well to quote some passages, if only to show how unreasonable and

unfounded was the prejudice against him at the time as a dangerous firebrand and revolutionary, and how, equally with the other writers already cited, the only revolution which Kingsley desired to see was a moral and religious revolution, not a political or a social one. For example, there is a sentence in the first letter which, separated from its context, gave rise to much misrepresentation. "My only quarrel", said Parson Lot, "with the Charter is that it does not go far enough." Taken by itself we can see that such a sentence might be so quoted as to give rise to a very false impression. But read the whole letter, and its tone is at once seen to be most honest and manly, earnest and grave, and as little revolutionary as anything possibly can be which is also sincere.

From Letter I. it is only necessary to quote one or two paragraphs. Letters II. and III. may be given almost in full.

Letter I.

"My friends,—If I give you credit for being sincere you must give me credit for being so too. I am a radical reformer. I am not one of those who laugh at your petition of the 10th of April; I have no patience with those who do. Suppose there

were but 250,000 honest names on that sheet—suppose the Charter itself were all stuff—yet you have still a right to fair play, a patient hearing, an honourable and courteous answer, whichever way it may be. But my only quarrel with the Charter is that it does not go far enough in reform. I want to see you *free*; but I do not see how what you ask for will give you what you want. I think you have fallen into just the same mistake as the rich of whom you complain—the very mistake which has been our curse and our nightmare—I mean the mistake of fancying that *legislative* reform is *social* reform, or that men's hearts can be changed by act of parliament. If anyone will tell me of a country where a charter made the rogues honest, or the idle industrious, I shall alter my opinion of the Charter, but not till then. It disappointed me bitterly when I read it. It seemed a harmless cry enough, but a poor, bald, constitution-mongering cry as I ever heard. That French cry of 'Organization of Labour' is worth a thousand of it, and yet that does not go to the bottom of the matter by many a mile.

. . . . . .

"But I must say honestly, whomsoever I may offend, the more I have read of your convention speeches and newspaper articles, the more convinced I am that too many of you are trying to do God's work with the devil's tools. What is the use of brilliant language about peace and the majesty of order, and universal love, though it may all be printed in letters a foot long, when it runs in the same team with ferocity, railing, mad one-eyed

excitement, talking itself into a passion like a street woman? Do you fancy that after a whole column spent in stirring men up to fury, a few twaddling copy-book headings about 'the sacred duty of order' will lay the storm again? What spirit is there but the devil's spirit, in bloodthirsty threats of *revenge*.

. . . . . .

"I denounce the weapons which you have been deluded into employing to gain you your rights, and the indecency and profligacy which you are letting be mixed up with them! Will you strengthen and justify your enemies? Will you disgust and cripple your friends? Will you go out of your way to do wrong? When you can be free by fair means, will you try foul? When you might keep the name of Liberty as spotless as the heaven from whence she comes, will you defile her with blasphemy, beastliness, and blood? When the cause of the poor is the cause of Almighty God, will you take it out of His hands to entrust it to the devil? These are bitter questions, but as you answer them so will you prosper. 'Be fit to be free, and God himself will set you free.'"

Letter II.

"If I was severe on some of you in my last letter, believe me, it is not because I do not feel for you. There are great allowances to be made for most of you. If you have followed a very different *Reformer's Guide* from mine, it is mainly the fault of us parsons: we have never told you that the true

Reformer's Guide, the true poor man's book, the true 'God's voice against Tyrants, Idlers, and Humbugs', was the Bible. Ay, you may sneer, but so it is; it is our fault, our great fault, that you should sneer—sneer at the very news which ought to be your glory and strength. It is our fault. We have used the Bible as if it were a mere special constable's handbook—an opium dose for keeping beasts of burden patient while they were being overloaded—a mere book to keep the poor in order. We have told you that the powers that be were ordained of God, without telling you who ordained the impotencies and imbecilities that be, alas! sometimes. We have told you that the Bible preached to you patience, while we have not told you that it promised you freedom. We have told you that the Bible preached the rights of property and the duties of labour, when (God knows) for once that it does that, it preaches ten times over the *duties of property* and the *rights of labour*. We have found plenty of texts to rebuke the sins of the poor, and very few to rebuke the sins of the rich. You say that we have not preached to you: really I think we have preached to you a great deal more than your fair share. For, for one wholesome rating that we have given the rich, we have given you a thousand. I have been as bad as anyone, but I am sick of it.

"Now, I tell you, my friends, there are *two sides* to the Bible; that instead of being a book to keep the poor in order, it is a book, from beginning to end, written *to keep the rich in order*. I do not wonder at your saying (as, alas! many of you are

saying) that the Bible is the invention of kings and prelates, to pretend God's sanction for superstition and tyranny; but I say that that Bible demands for the poor as much and more, than they demand for themselves; that it is full of the most awful warnings and restrictions to the rich; that it expresses the deepest yearnings of the poor man's heart far more nobly, more searchingly, more daringly, more eloquently, than any modern orator has done. I say that it gives a ray of hope—say rather a certain dawn of a glorious future, such as no universal suffrage, free-trade, communism, organization of labour, or any other Morrison's-pill-measure can give—and yet of a future which will embrace all that is good in these things—a future of science, of justice, of freedom, when idlers and oppressors shall no more dare to plead parchments and acts of parliament for their iniquities, when the laws shall be God's laws, and God shall take the matter into His own hands, when 'He shall keep the simple folk *by their rights*, defend the children of the poor, and punish the wrong-doer'. I say the Bible promises *this*, not in a few places only, but *throughout*; it is the thought which runs through the whole Bible. 'Justice from God to those whom men oppress — glory from God to those whom men despise.'"

. . . . . .

Letter III.

. . . . . .

"What are the things you demand most earnestly? Is not one of them that no man shall enjoy wages without doing work?

"The Bible says at once, that '*he that will not work, neither shall he eat*'; and as the Bible speaks to rich as well as poor, so is that speech meant for the idle rich as well as for the idle poor.

"Do you not say that the cause of the poor is the cause of God?

"And are not those noble old Hebrew Psalms full of the same thought from beginning to end? How 'the poor commits himself to God, for He is the helper of the friendless'! How, 'when they are diminished or brought low through *oppression*, through any plague or trouble, though He suffer them to be evil intreated by tyrants, yet helpeth He the poor out of misery, and maketh His households like a flock of sheep'! How 'the poor shall not always be forgotten — the patient abiding of the meek shall not perish for ever'! Only, my friends, let it be the *patient abiding of the meek*, not the frantic boasts of the bloodthirsty.

You say that the poor man has his rights as well as the rich. So says the Bible; it says more —it says that God inspires the poor with the desire of liberty: that he helps them to their right. 'Lord, thou hast heard the desire of the poor. Thou preparest their heart, and thine ear hearkeneth thereto: to help the fatherless and poor *unto their right, that*

the man of the world be no more exalted against them.' Oh you who raise righteous cries against capital overriding labour, against worldly politicians who make the poor their stepping-stones to wealth and office! God grant that that glorious text may give you the same hope and comfort as it has given me in many a black and bitter hour!

. . . . . .

"You cry, and I cry, 'A fair day's wages for a fair day's work'. And is not the doctrine of the whole Bible that even in that last most awful judgment—'Every man shall be judged *according to his works*'? And are there not written in the Bible these awful words—'Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl, for your miseries that shall come upon you. Your gold and silver is cankered; and the *rust of them* (*i.e.* the accumulation of unemployed capital) *shall be a witness against you.*' . . . My friends, these are but a few drops from the inexhaustible well of *The Poor Man's Book*. . . . I intreat you, I adjure you, to *trust the Bible*, to trust my samples from it, and *to read it honestly for yourselves*, and see if it be not the true *Radical Reformer's Guide*—God's everlasting witness against oppression and cruelty and idleness."

I may close this chapter by adding to these extracts from the *Politics* two characteristic passages from *Alton Locke*. That novel, which has been well said to be Kingsley's "greatest poem and grandest sermon", was

published in the summer of 1850. There is some truth perhaps in Carlyle's blunt criticism of the book, for it is more of a political pamphlet than a carefully constructed work of art. "Your book", Carlyle wrote to him, "is definable as *crude*; to make the malt sweet the fire should and must be slow; the impression is of a fervid creation, still left half chaotic." And Kingsley, I am sure, would not have been careful to answer the criticism, for he was quite well aware, and not in the least ashamed of the fact, that it was at least with the objects of a political pamphleteer that he had conceived the book. But one tribute to the artistic power of the novel Carlyle did give, in which he has rightly been followed by all the critics. "But Saunders Mackaye", he added, "is nearly perfect; I greatly wonder how you did contrive to manage him."

We may still wonder, for Mrs. Kingsley in the *Memories* does not tell us how her husband, or where, or when, previous to 1849, could have picked up this "rugged old hero", whose personification is indeed, as Carlyle put it, "a wonderfully splendid and coherent piece of Scotch bravura". Let my first quotation, then, be one which introduces

this shrewd, excellent, pure-hearted old Scotchman. Alton Locke, the young tailor-poet, had commenced his essays by a description of the South Sea Islands, and Mackaye tells him to choose his subject from the poetry that lies around him.

"'What the deevil! is there no harlotry and idolatry here in England, that ye maun gang speerin' after it in the Cannibal Islands? Are ye gaun to be like they puir aristocratic bodies that wad suner hear an Italian dog howl than an English nightingale sing?

"'Coral Islands? Pacific? What do ye ken about Pacifics? Are ye a Cockney or a Cannibal Islander? Dinna stand there, ye gowk, as fusionless as a docken, but tell me that. Where do ye live?'

"'What do you mean, Mr. Mackaye?' asked I with a doleful and disappointed visage.

"'Mean—why, if God had meant ye to write about Pacifics, He'd ha' put ye there—and because he means ye to write about London town, He's put ye there—and gien ye an unco sharp taste of the ways o't; and I'll gie ye another. Come along wi' me.' And he seized me by the arm, and hardly giving me time to put on my hat, marched me out into the streets, and away through Clare Market to St. Giles'.

"It was a foul, chilly, foggy Saturday night. From the butchers' and greengrocers' shops the gas

lights flared and flickered, wild and ghastly, over haggard groups of slip-shod dirty women bargaining for scraps of stale meat and frost-bitten vegetables, wrangling about short weight and bad quality. Fish stalls and fruit stalls lined the edge of the greasy pavement, sending up odours as foul as the language of the sellers and buyers. Blood and sewer water crawled from under doors and out of spouts, and reeked down the gutters among offal, animal and vegetable, in every state of putrefaction. Foul vapours rose from cow-sheds and slaughter-houses, and the doorways of undrained alleys, where the inhabitants carried the filth out on their shoes from the back yard into the court, and from the court into the main street; while above, hanging like cliffs over the streets—those narrow brawling torrents of filth and poverty and sin—the houses with their teeming load of life were piled up into the dingy choking night. A ghastly, deafening, sickening sight it was. Go, scented Belgravian! and see what London is! and then go to the Library which God has given thee—one often fears in vain—and see what science says this London might be!

"He stopped suddenly before the entrance of a miserable alley.

"'Look!—there's not a soul down that yard but's either beggar, drunkard, thief, or worse. Write about that! Say how ye saw the mouth o' hell, and the twa pillars thereof at the entry—the pawnbroker's shop o' one side, and the gin palace at the other—twa monstrous deevils, eating up men,

women and bairns, body and soul. Are na they a mair damnable man-devouring idol than ony red-hot statue o' Moloch, or wicker-Gogmagog, wherein auld Britons burnt their prisoners? Look at thae bare-footed, bare-backed hizzies, wi' their arms roun' the men's necks, and their mouths full of vitriol and beastly words! Look at that Irish-woman pouring the gin down the babbie's throat! Look at that raff o' a boy gaun out o' the pawn-shop, where he has been pledging the handkerchief he stole the morning, into the gin shop to buy beer poisoned wi' grains o' paradise, and cocculus indicus, and saut, and a' damnable, maddening, thirst-breeding, lust-breeding drugs! Look at that girl that went in wi' a shawl to her back, and cam' out wi'out ane! Drunkards frae the breast!—harlots frae the cradle!—damned before they are born! John Calvin had an inkling o' the truth there, I'm a'most driven to think, wi' his reprobation deevils' doctrines.'

"'Well—but—Mr. Mackaye—I know nothing about these poor creatures.'

"'Then ye ought. What do ye ken aboot the Pacific? Which is maist to your business?—thae bare-backed hizzies that play the harlot o' the other side o' the warld, or these—these thousands o' bare-backed hizzies that play the harlot o' your ain side—made out o' your ain flesh and blood? You a poet? True poetry, like true charity, my laddie, begins at hame. If ye'll be a poet at a', ye maun be a Cockney poet, and while the Cockneys be what they be, ye maun write, like Jeremiah of old, o' lamentation and mournin' and wae, for the sins o'

your people. Gin ye want to learn the spirit o' a people's poet, down wi' your Bible, and read thae auld Hebrew prophets: gin ye would learn the style, read your Burns frae morning to night: and gin ye'd learn the matter, just gang after your nose, and keep your eyes open, and ye'll no miss it.'

"'But all this is so—so unpoetical.'

"'Hech! Is there no the heeven above them there, and the hell beneath them, and God frowning and the Deevil grinning. No poetry there! Is no the verra idea of the classic tragedy defined to be, man conquered by circumstance? Canna ye see it there? And the very idea of the modern tragedy, man conquering circumstance?—and I'll show ye that too—in mony a garret where no eye but the gude God's enters, to see the patience and the fortitude, and the self-sacrifice, and the luve stronger than death, that's shining in thae dark places o' the earth. Come wi' me, and see.'"

Let me close the chapter with one more extract. It is the rhapsody, in the style of Lamennais' *Paroles d'un Croyant*, which Kingsley puts into the mouth of his heroine. She is speaking of Christ as the great Social Emancipator, who alone can renovate human society.

"She spoke of Him as the great Reformer and yet as the true Conservative: the inspirer of all new truths, revealing in the Bible to every age abysses

of new wisdom as the times require: and yet the indicator of all which is ancient and eternal—the justifier of his own dealings with man from the beginning. She spoke of Him as the true demagogue—the Champion of the poor; and yet as the true king, above and below all earthly rank; on whose will alone all real superiority of man to man, all time-justified and time-honoured usages of the family, the society, the nation stand, and shall stand for ever. . . . Look at the great societies of our own day, which, however imperfectly, still lovingly and earnestly do their measure of God's work at home and abroad; and say, when was there ever real union, co-operation, philanthropy, equality, brotherhood among men, save in loyalty to Him—Jesus who died upon the Cross."

Chapter VI.

"The Christian Socialists."

"Who in the light of fuller day
Of loving science, holier laws,
Bless us, faint heralds of their cause,
Dim beacons of their glorious way.
Failure? While tide-floods rise and boil
Round cape and isle, in port and cove,
Resistless, star-led from above:
What though our tiny wave recoil?"

During the summer of 1849 a series of meetings, held at the house of Mr. Maurice, which had been planned by the friends mentioned in the last chapter, in conference with several of the Chartist leaders, culminated in a meeting, at which it was determined to take some practical step towards combating the fearful evils, in the slop system of the tailoring trade and in other depressed industries, concerning which a deep impression had been made on the public mind by the revelations of certain articles by Mr. Mahew in the pages of the *Morning Chronicle*. This meeting was addressed by Mr. Maurice in a striking speech, in which he protested against the evils of unrestricted competition, and asserted that the old faith of Christendom must be once more

proclaimed as the only power which could regenerate society, and make Socialism morally healthy and vigorous by rescuing it from its existing anti-Christian and revolutionary advocates. No record of Mr. Maurice's speech seems to exist, but the following trenchant words, which he wrote shortly afterwards, might well have formed its substance:—[1]

"Competition is put forth as the law of the universe. That is a lie. The time is come for us to declare that it is a lie. I see no way but associating for work instead of for strikes. I do not say or think we feel that the relation of the employer and the employed is not a true relation. I do not determine that wages may not be a righteous mode of expressing that relation. But at present it is clear that this relation is destroyed, that the payment of wages is nothing but a deception. We may restore the old state of things: we may bring in a new one. God will decide that. His voice has gone forth clearly bidding us come forward to fight against the present state of things; to call men to repentance first of all: but then also, as it seems to me, to give them an opportunity of showing their repentance and bringing forth fruits worthy of it. . . . Given a moral state, and it seems to me the . . . revelations are rather in favour of the conclusion that the old position of master and worker might be a healthy one. But it is no old condition we are contending with, but an accursed new one, the product of a

[1] *Life of Frederick Maurice*, vol. ii. p. 32.

hateful devilish theory which must be fought with to the death."

Of this speech Kingsley, writing to his wife, says enthusiastically: "Last night will never be forgotten by many many men. Maurice was—I cannot describe it. Chartists told me this morning that many were affected even to tears. The man was inspired, gigantic. He stunned us. I will tell you all when I can collect myself."[1]

The enthusiasm called forth by this meeting, at any rate, resulted in the institution of the first Co-operative Association of Tailors. It was in the interests of this institution that Kingsley wrote his famous tract "Cheap Clothes and Nasty". This pamphlet was denounced at the time, by many good, well-meaning men even, as a foul attack on the rights and claims of education and society, of law and order. It was nothing of the kind. It was in reality an indictment of the competitive system and a plea for co-operation, or of some system in which the principle of association should take the place of competition, founded on the recital of a number of instances of the terrible effects, economic and moral, of the slop system, taken from the evidence of the commissioner of the *Morning*

[1] *Economic Review*, April, 1891.

Chronicle. It was the first paragraph of the tract probably which most "wrung the withers" of the orthodox "Quarterly Reviewer" of the day.

"King Ryence, says the Legend of Prince Arthur, wore a paletot trimmed with kings' beards. In the first French Revolution (so Carlyle assures us) there arose at Meudon tanneries of human skins. Mammon, at once tyrant and revolutionary, follows both these noble examples — in a more respectable way, doubtless, for Mammon hates cruelty; bodily pain is his devil—the worst evil which he, in his effeminacy, can conceive. So he shrieks benevolently when a drunken soldier is flogged; but he trims his paletots, and adorns his legs with the flesh of men and the skins of women, with degradation, pestilence, heathendom, and despair, and then chuckles self-complacently over the smallness of his tailor's bills. Hypocrite!—straining at a gnat and swallowing a camel! What is flogging or hanging, King Ryence's paletot, or the tanneries of Meudon, to the slavery, starvation, waste of life, year-long imprisonment in dungeons narrower and fouler than those of the Inquisition, which goes on among thousands of free English clothes-makers at this day?

"'The man is mad', says Mammon, smiling supercilious pity. Yes, Mammon, mad as Paul before Festus, and for much the same reason too. Much learning has made us mad. From two

articles of the *Morning Chronicle* of Friday, 14th December, and Tuesday, 18th December, on the condition of the working tailors, we learnt too much to leave us altogether masters of ourselves. But there is method in our madness; we can give reasons for it—satisfactory to ourselves, perhaps also to Him who made us, and you and all tailors likewise. Will you, freshly bedizened, you and your footmen, from Nebuchadnezzar & Co.'s 'Emporium of Fashion', hear a little about how your finery is made? You are always calling out for facts, and have a firm belief in salvation by statistics. Listen to a few."

This is strong and passionate language, no doubt. And reading it in cold blood fifty years afterwards we might perhaps have been tempted even to say that Kingsley was rash and intemperate to write as he did. But in memory of the revelations of the Royal Commission of only a few years ago on the existing sweating system, still rampant in East London and many of our great towns, with the knowledge of the facts so carefully and laboriously collected for us by Mr. Charles Booth in his monumental work on *Life and Labour in London*, can we read such a passage in cold blood? Ought we to do so? I think not. We can well afford at any rate to pardon Charles Kingsley, if his warm heart and out-

raged sense of pity suffered neither taste nor expediency nor reticence to silence his bitter earnest words for truth and righteousness and humanity. And for ourselves, let us at any rate determine that our passion of philanthropy shall become really an effective force in action. For there is much yet to be done. It is true that since Kingsley's time the men in the tailoring and allied trades have learnt to protect themselves by the organization of their unions and trade societies. But the women workers are almost as defenceless as they were fifty years ago. The administration of the Factory Acts in relation to workshop female labour is still very inefficient. In many cases the inspection is a mere farce. What, for example, can one inspector do in a large town like Liverpool to see that the regulations of the Act are properly enforced? As a matter of fact the time regulations are daily set at nought, not only in the sweating dens, but in many of the workrooms of the tradesmen of the city. In most of our large towns, in fact, the organization of women's labour is becoming a vital question. For nothing is more clear, as the result of the exhaustive inquiries of Mr. Charles Booth, than that it is hopeless to cope with the still

deplorable evils of the sweating system in the present disorganized condition of women's labour. The women, moreover, need much preliminary training before they can grasp the idea of combination. The members of the different trades need to be gathered together in social clubs, where they may learn to know and trust one another, and gradually build up those social virtues of self-reliance, discipline, loyalty, and trustfulness upon which the subsequent stability of the trade society will largely rest. In this preliminary work there is much work still to be done by those who have learnt the lesson of the Christian Socialists of fifty years ago, and by others, and not least perhaps — Charles Kingsley would remind us—by those ladies of leisure, for whom at present too often the terrible truth is, that in the skirts of their clothing is found the blood of the souls of God's people —"Women who carelessly wear fine clothes without having inquired into the possible cost in a sister's shame or death . . . and who forget that *some cheap things are too dear for human use*".

There is a passage, which I may quote here, from *Alton Locke*, in which Kingsley, by his imaginative genius, may perhaps help

us to realize facts, which neither his own tract, "Cheap Clothes and Nasty", nor the revelations of the late Royal Commission on the Sweating System, may have quite brought home to us so vividly:—

"There was no bed in the room,—no table. It was bare of furniture, comfortless, and freezing cold; but with the exception of the plaster dropping from the roof, and the broken windows patched with rags and paper, there was a scrupulous neatness about the whole which contrasted strangely with the filth and slovenliness outside. On a broken chair by the chimney sat a miserable old woman, fancying that she was warming her hands over embers that had long been cold, and muttering to herself with palsied lips about the guardians and the workhouse; while upon a few rags upon the floor lay a girl, ugly, marked with small-pox, hollow-eyed, emaciated,—her only bed-clothes the skirt of a large handsome new riding-habit, at which two other girls, lean and tawdry, were stitching busily as they sat right and left of her on the floor. The old woman took no notice of us as we entered; but one of the girls looked up, and, with a pleased gesture of recognition, put her fingers on her lips, and whispered—'Ellen's asleep'.

"'I am not asleep, dears,' answered a faint unearthly voice; 'I was only praying. Is that Mr. Mackaye?'

"'Aye, my lasses, but ha' ye gotten no fire the nicht?'

"'No,' said one of them bitterly—'we've earned no fire to-night, by fair trade or foul either.'

"I saw Mackaye slip something into the hand of one of the girls and whisper, 'A half-hundredweight of coals;' to which she replied with an eager look of gratitude I can never forget, and hurried out. Then the sufferer, as if taking advantage of her absence, began to speak quickly and hurriedly.

"'Oh, Mr. Mackaye,—dear, kind Mr. Mackaye,—do speak to her; and do speak to poor Lizzy here! I'm not afraid to say it before her because she is more gentle-like, and hasn't learnt to say bad words yet; but do speak to them, and tell them not to go the bad way like all the rest. Tell them it'll never prosper. I know it's want that drives them to it, as it drives all of us,—but tell them it's best to starve and die honest girls, than to go about with the shame and the curse of God on their hearts for the sake of keeping this vile, poor, miserable body together for a few short years more in this world of sorrow. . . . For Lizzy here, I did hope she had repented of it, after all my talking to her; but since I've been so bad, and the girls have had to keep me most of the time, she's gone out o' nights just as bad as ever.'

"Lizzy had hid her face in her hands the greater part of this speech. Now she looked up passionately,—almost fiercely:—

"'Repent!—I have repented,—I repent of it every hour: I hate myself and I hate all the world because of it; but I must—I must: I cannot see her starve, and I cannot starve myself. When she

first fell sick she kept on as long as she could, doing what she could; and then between us we only earned three shillings a-week. . . . And now Ellen can't work at all; and there's four of us with the old lady to keep off two's work that couldn't keep themselves alone.'

"At this moment the other girl entered with the coals. 'We have been telling Mr. Mackaye everything,' said poor Lizzy.

"'A pleasant story, isn't it? Oh, if that fine lady, as we're making this riding-habit for, would just spare half the money that goes in dressing her up to ride in the Park to send us out to the colonies, wouldn't I be an honest girl there, and maybe an honest man's wife! Oh, my God, wouldn't I slave my fingers to the bone for him! Wouldn't I mend my life there! It 'ud be like getting into heaven out of hell. But now we must—we must, I tell you.'

"And she sat down and began stitching frantically at the riding-habit, from which the other girl had hardly lifted her eyes or hands for a moment during our visit."

It was because Maurice and Kingsley also felt the necessity of much preliminary work in the training of men, if the co-operative societies which they hoped to see everywhere established were to be a success, that in 1850 they followed up the establishment of the Association of Tailors in Castle Street by

the organization of the Society for the Promotion of Working-men's Associations, and by the publication of the Tracts on Christian Socialism, setting forth the principles upon which the movement was to be based.

The fundamental principle of the Society was stated to be "the practical application of Christianity to the purposes of trade and industry". In Tract V. its objects are set forth in the following statement which accompanied the Society's Constitution, and also Model Rules for Associations:—

"It is now our business to show by what machinery the objects of Christian Socialism can, as we believe, be compassed; how working-men can release themselves, and can be helped by others to release themselves, from the thraldom of individual labour under the competitive system; or at least how far they can at present, by honest fellowship, mitigate its evils. In offering this machinery to others, we are bound to protest against that idolatry of social mechanism, which imagines society as a mere assemblage of wheels and springs, and not as a partnership of living men, which takes account of the form alone, and not of the spirit which animates it; but we have also to protest with scarcely less of earnestness against that idolatry of individual will, which scorns all regular means of action—looks for all social

improvements to the mere genius of some mighty leader, in whose way it would almost place obstacles, like hurdles for him to leap over, rather than smooth the way for the feebler crowd; or against that faith which sees God only in the works of nature, and not in the works of men; which may delight in tracing the harmonies of the solar system, yet sees nothing but human devices and intellectual snares in the harmonies of social organization; which acknowledges as divine the instinctive laws of a community of bees and of emmets, but turns away from the laws of a fellowship of men as if they had nothing to do with the will, with the wisdom, with the love of the Great Lawgiver."

In a similar spirit in a later number of the *Christian Socialist* Kingsley wrote:—

"I believe political economy to be all but the highest and most spiritual of sciences; the science of organizing politics and of making men good citizens; of realizing outwardly the ideas of the kingdom of God. But I will say nothing about it now; I will simply ask, 'If you allow us to use moral means to hop-pickers, why not to their masters? If to the outward accidents and symptoms of the system, why not to the symptom itself?"

To the objection, 'you must not interfere between employer and employed', he replies:

"These are not moral questions; they are ma-

terial facts, affecting material interests; and a political economy which cannot alter these facts is not worthy the name of a science; it does not even show us how to regulate those very material interests which it claims as its exclusive sphere. . . . I believe that political economy can and will learn how to cure these evils, and that in accordance with the formulæ inductively discovered by such men as Bentham, Ricardo, Mill, and Chalmers. . . . 'Nature is conquered in obeying her' ought to be held as true in political economy as in chemistry; and the man who tells us that we ought to investigate nature, simply to sit still patiently under her, and let her freeze, and ruin and starve and stink us to death, is a goose, whether he calls himself a chemist or a political economist."

The Society for Promoting Working-men's Associations brought together men of very various gifts and attainments, all giving of their best to make the movement a success. Among them, in addition to those we have already mentioned, it is right here to record the names of Dr. Walsh, afterwards one of the most active members of the Council of the Metropolitan Sanitary Association; Augustus Vansittart, Fellow of Trinity, Cambridge, who became the first treasurer of the Association, and his cousin, E. Vansittart Neale; Cuthbert Ellison, a friend of the East

End Needlewomen's Society, and a friend also of Thackeray, and "the original", it is said, "of Arthur Pendennis"; Charles Sully, the first secretary, bookbinder by trade, in early days a Physical-force Chartist,—he had fought twice behind the barricades in Paris Revolutions,—but had effectually learnt the lesson that force is no remedy, for Tract V. in *Christian Socialism*, quoted above, is substantially his; and Lloyd Jones, a master tailor in Oxford Street, an old disciple of Mr. Owen, one of his Socialist lecturers, who afterwards became a most accomplished journalist, the ablest and honestest of Trades-union advocates, the life-long friend of co-operation, and indeed of all good movements for the benefit of the industrial classes.

Of all these, however, Mr. E. Vansittart Neale was the man to whom the movement was eventually most indebted.[1] He was indeed, as Professor Brentano has said, "a hero and a saint", whose practical life has done more for the reconciliation of the classes and the masses than volumes written by others. Up to the time of his joining the Council of Promoters, the action of the Association had been cautious and tentative. It had been

[1] *Economic Review*, Jan. and April, 1893.

the means of starting some small productive societies in London, of tailors, shoemakers, and bakers, and much correspondence was pouring in upon them from the co-operative societies of the north of England asking for advice as to rules, and for legal opinions as to joint funds and property. Vansittart Neale had no sooner joined the Council than he began, as Judge Hughes has said, to "force the running". He was a man of large means and of larger generosity. He at once founded the first London Co-operative Stores in Charlotte Street, Fitzroy Square, and also advanced the capital to start two Working Builders' Associations. He then established a "Central Co-operative Agency" for the use of all associations. This, as far as the then state of the law would allow, was an anticipation of the great English and Scottish Wholesale Societies. Its main object was to organize and stimulate consumption, by providing a central society through which the stores could obtain all their supplies on the best wholesale terms. The movement now rapidly developed, and with its development the need for further legal protection began to be felt. Fortunately in 1851 a committee of the House of Commons had

been appointed to inquire into the subject of the investment for the savings of the middle and working classes. By the efforts chiefly of Mr. Ludlow and Mr. Neale, some of the members of the Council of Promoters were called, among other witnesses, before it. The result was that an overwhelming case was made out for giving "these humble men", as the chairman of the Parliamentary Committee called them, the necessary facilities for carrying on their business. In the session of 1852 the first Industrial and Provident Societies Act was passed, under which the co-operative stores and associations obtained a legal status as trading bodies. The Act has been rightly called the "Magna Carta" of the labouring class. It certainly formed an epoch in the history of co-operation.

The passing of the Industrial and Provident Societies Act in 1852 was immediately followed by a great outburst of Co-operation in the northern counties, which practically removed the centre of the movement from London and abolished the *raison d'être* of the Council of Promoters. The second general conference or congress of Co-operators was held at Manchester on August 15th, 1853, and the three principles which Maurice had

laid down for the original association were unanimously adopted. They were these:—

I. That human society is a body consisting of many members, not a collection of warring atoms.
II. That true workmen must be fellow-workers and not rivals.
III. That a principle of justice, not of selfishness, must govern exchanges.

These principles remain as part of the constitution of the General Co-operative Union to-day. But, alas for poor human nature! if the principles of Maurice and Kingsley and the early Christian Socialists are still there in print, they have too often been forgotten in practice by the later Co-operators.

In 1864 the Co-operative Wholesale Society was founded at Manchester, and prospered mightily. In four years two hundred societies had become members. It was doing business of about half a million a year, and was rapidly becoming the official and recognized representative organ of Co-operation in England. In 1897 this society had a turn-over of £11,920,143, and an accumulated capital of £2,472,321.

But the very success of the movement has

brought with it elements of danger. No one can have watched the later development of Industrial Co-operation without experiencing some fear lest it might degenerate into a vast system of mere joint-stock shopkeeping, conducted on selfish principles, with no dominant moral purpose pervading it, no longer striving earnestly for the amelioration of social and industrial conditions, but in the field of commercial distribution aiming chiefly at large dividends, and in the case of productive undertakings showing no tendency to share profits with its work-people.

No one was more conscious of this danger than Mr. Vansittart Neale. During the whole of the forty years—he died in 1893—of his close connection with the movement, and especially during the later years in which he had taken upon himself the whole secretarial duties of the Co-operative Union, devoting himself and his fortune absolutely to its business, he had kept up one long struggle against this evil spirit of competition and greed, which he felt to be in direct contradiction to the principles which had been accepted as fundamental by the union, and which had been in letter confirmed again and again by the Co-operative Congress. "None

but the happiest old man in England," says Judge Hughes of him, "one who could do altogether without sight and live upon the evidence of things not seen — could have gone on so long bearing, forbearing, and hoping; but even he at last began to have his doubts." A few months before his death he attended the Rochdale Congress of 1893. The vicar of Rochdale, Archdeacon Wilson, preached the usual "Congress sermon", on the text, "Can Satan cast out Satan?" and in it appealed to the co-operators not to neglect the high ideals of their founders.

"If you let selfishness of aim", he said, "creep over the movement, as the writer in last week's *Co-operative News* who says, 'I want a good big dividend first, then it will be time to squander our profits on education'—if the time ever comes when that spirit represents your aim, you may write 'Ichabod' over your doors in Toad Lane. Nothing but magnanimity and sympathy will build up what shall endure. It is the eternal law of God, and man kicks against it in vain."

On the very next day a Rochdale man, the chairman of the Wholesale Society, the chief opponent of sharing profits with labour and advocate of production by the wholesale societies and all profits to the consumer, was

selected to preside at the congress and give the inaugural address. In his first words he accepted the challenge of Archdeacon Wilson, dwelt strongly on the charm of "dividend hunting", and added:—

"I know I shall say things that people will say 'No! No!' to this morning; but I intend to say them nevertheless, because it is time that namby-pambyism was crushed at these Congresses. I should not have made these remarks but for a sermon I heard last night from my own spiritual adviser. He is a capital adviser in spiritual matters, but not altogether reliable on co-operative affairs."

Is, then, "the high ideal" of the Christian Socialists after all a failure? Does the victory really lie with the giant Goliath of Competition and his robust swagger—"a good big dividend first, and no profits to the workman"?

Certainly the prospect at first sight does not seem very hopeful. When one reflects as to what the average of mankind is to-day, to what our species, self-regarding by its very essence, is at best; to what our actual society, after nineteen centuries of Christianity, is at this latest hour of its development, with its egoism intensified by the ethics of the market; when one considers the average moral tone of

commercial society, its real working code of morality, its low theory of life, its false valuation of the things good and evil in life, its lost ideal of heroism, its relaxed standard of honour, its forgotten notions of duty; above all, when we bring ourselves to confess honestly that religious belief, the last reserve force against the pressure of self-interest, has, in relation to business life, with so many of us, practically broken down, it is indeed difficult to take an optimistic view of the future of industrial society.

And yet, on the other hand, we cannot deny, we must indeed acknowledge with thankful recognition, that there is also much to make us hopeful. When we compare the state of public opinion on economic morals at the time of the inception of the Christian Socialist movement with the state of public opinion now, we are at least conscious of a marked increase of solicitude about all the problems of industrial and social life, and of sympathy with the struggles, sufferings, responsibilities, and anxieties which those problems involve. And beyond, too, this quickened sense of responsibility for the conditions under which the poorer members of the community live, there has also been a new

departure in economic thought, relaxing the dread of interference with natural laws, which at one time was so keenly felt by both economic teachers and the world at large. Above all, there has come an absolutely changed attitude on the part of the Church of England herself in regard to all these social problems, a recognition in the first place that the Church of Christ has a social mission, has a duty laid upon her, of harmonizing, in the light of the Incarnation, all the facts of human life—social, political, industrial, and as a consequence of that, an acknowledgment that many of the ideas which are stirring in the world outside, in minds nowise Church-like to begin with, are the very same ideas which are to be found at the heart of the Christian religion.

This change of attitude on the part of the Church towards social problems has undoubtedly in the last forty years been very great; but it would not be difficult to trace back the causes of change to the teaching of the Christian Socialists of 1848. It may be sufficient here and now to record three facts which sufficiently mark the gradual steps of the movement.

In the year 1876 a little band of Anglican clergy, directly tracing their inspiration to the

teaching of Charles Kingsley—one of their number at least had been a pupil of both Maurice and Kingsley at Cambridge—organized a small society whose chief aim was to bring the doctrine, discipline, and worship of the Church of England more into harmony with what they thought to be the special social needs of English democracy. They called their society "The Guild of S. Matthew". They set before their members three objects:

I. To get rid, by every possible means, of the existing prejudices, especially on the part of "secularists", against the Church, her sacraments and doctrines: and to endeavour to "justify God to the people".

II. To promote the study of social and political questions in the light of the Incarnation.

III. To promote frequent and reverent worship in the Holy Communion, and a better observance of the teaching of the Church of England, as set forth in the Book of Common Prayer.

The following extract from an early report of the Guild will sufficiently indicate the character of its work and the similarity of its ideal to that of the early Christian Socialists:—

"Believing, as we do, that the great fact of the Incarnation is the foundation of Christian teaching

and practice, we cannot see how or why the Christian Church should not consider every question bearing upon the welfare, secular and spiritual, of man. We feel the absolute need of preaching in season and out of season 'the Gospel of the Kingdom', the fact that the Church is a real living society on this earth, working for the greatest good of the greatest number, and embodying in her sacraments and in her creeds the strongest assertions of true 'liberty, equality, and fraternity' ever given to the world, doing this, too, on far higher grounds than can possibly be taken by any 'secular' creed or society. Does the secularist talk of fraternity? We tell him there is no merely theoretical basis of true fraternity so grand or sure as the fact of the Fatherhood of God. Of equality? Nowhere is it embodied so grandly as in Holy Baptism and in the Holy Communion; nowhere have its principles been carried out to their logical conclusions so thoroughly as in the Communistic Church of Jerusalem. Of liberty? The priests and bishops of the English Church have constantly led the people to victory over kings and pope alike. Of the rights of labour? Bible history, as apart from Bible biography, begins with a 'strike' (Ex. v. 45), and some of the bitterest denunciations of the prophets both of the Old and of the New Testaments are launched against those 'who keep back by fraud the hire of the labourers who have reaped their fields'. Of patriotism? The English Church welded the incoherent Saxon kingdoms into one nation. The representative government of later

times was modelled after the earlier councils of the Church. Of the wider bond of the brotherhood of nations? St. Paul preached it for the first time in Europe, in the teeth of the exclusive Greeks at Athens. The Hebrew prophets—nay, more, our Lord Himself—reiterated it in equally exclusive Judæa. The Catholic Church is the only true international."

Much good work was done by the Guild in the large towns, chiefly in combating the errors of "secularism" as to the function of the Church, and answering in lectures and in public discussion the objections to Christianity brought by the followers of Mr. Bradlaugh. A few years later, however, the work of the Guild was taken up and extended by the Christian Social Union, a society which, taking its origin at Oxford, has, during the last few years, under the presidency of the Bishop of Durham, multiplied its branches throughout the country, and now numbers a very large number of the younger clergy in its ranks. The following is the simple form of this society's constitution:—

"This Union consists of Members of the Church who have the following objects at heart:—

"I. To claim for the Christian law the ultimate authority to rule social practice.

"II. To study in common how to apply the moral truths and principles of Christianity to the social and economic difficulties of the present time.

"III. To present Christ in practical life as the Living Master and King, the enemy of wrong and selfishness, the power of righteousness and love."

Lastly, no more remarkable sign of the change that has come over the Church of England since the time of Charles Kingsley, on the subject of Christian Socialism, can well be cited than the report on the office of the Church in respect to industrial problems, which was issued last year by the conference of more than two hundred Anglican bishops assembled at Lambeth.

"The primary duty of the Church, as such, and within her, of the clergy, is that of ministry to men in the things of character, conscience, and faith. In doing this she also does her greatest social duty. Character in the citizen is the first social need; character with its securities in a candid, enlightened, and vigorous conscience, and a strong faith in goodness and in God. The Church owes this duty to all classes alike. Nothing must be allowed to distract her from it, or needlessly to impede or prejudice her in its discharge, and this requires of the clergy, as spiritual officers, the exercise of

great discretion in any attempt to bring within their sphere work of a more distinctively social kind.

"But while this cannot be too strongly said, it is not the whole truth. Character is influenced at every point by social conditions, and active conscience, in an industrial society, will look for moral guidance on industrial matters.

"Economic science does not claim to give this, its task being to inform, but not to determine the conscience and the judgment. But we believe that Christ our Master does give such guidance by His examples and teachings, and by the present workings of His Spirit; and therefore, under Him, Christian authority must in a measure do the same, the authority, that is, of the whole Christian body, and of an enlightened Christian opinion. This is part of the duty of a Christian society, as witnessing for Christ, and representing Him in this present world, occupied with His work of setting up the kingdom of God, under and amidst the natural conditions of human life. In this work the clergy, whose special duty it is to ponder the bearings of Christian principles, have their part; but the Christian laity, who deal directly with the social and economic facts, can do even more."

The bishops then go on to submit that Christian social duty will operate in two directions:

"(1) The recognition, inculcation, and application

of certain Christian principles. They offer the following as examples:—

"(*a*) The Principle of Brotherhood. This principle of brotherhood, or fellowship in Christ, proclaiming, as it does, that men are members one of another, should act in all the relations of life as a constant counterpoise to the instinct of competition.

"(*b*) The Principle of Labour, that every man is bound to service—the service of God and man. Labour and service are to be understood in their widest and most inclusive sense: but in some sense they are obligatory on all. The wilfully idle man, and the man who lives only for himself, are out of place in a Christian community. Work, accordingly, is not to be looked upon as an irksome necessity for some, but as the honourable task and privilege of all.

"(*c*) The Principle of Justice. God is no respecter of persons. Inequalities indeed of every kind are interwoven with the whole providential order of human life, and are recognized emphatically in our Lord's own words. But the social order cannot ignore the interests of any of its parts, and must, moreover, be tested by the degree in which it secures for each freedom for happy, useful, and untrammelled life, and distributes, as widely and equitably as may be, social advantages and opportunities.

"(*d*) The Principle of Public Responsibility. A Christian community, as a whole, is morally responsible for the character of its own economic and social order, and for deciding to what extent matters affecting that order are to be left to individual

initiative and to the unregulated play of economic forces. Factory and sanitary legislation, the institution of a government labour department, and the influence of government, or of public opinion and the press, or of eminent citizens, in helping to avoid or reconcile industrial conflicts, are instances in point.

"(2) Christian opinion should be awake to repudiate and condemn either open breaches of social justice and duty, or maxims and principles of an unchristian character. It ought to condemn the belief that economic conditions are to be left to the action of material causes and mechanical laws uncontrolled by any moral responsibility. It can pronounce certain conditions of labour to be intolerable. It can insist that the employer's personal responsibility, as such, is not lost by his membership in a commercial or industrial company. It can press upon retail purchasers the obligation to consider, not only the cheapness of the goods supplied to them, but also the probable conditions of their production. It can speak plainly of evils which attach to the economic system under which we live, such as certain forms of luxurious extravagance, the wide-spread pursuit of money by financial gambling, the dishonesties of trade into which men are driven by feverish competition, and the violences and reprisals of industrial warfare."

. . . . . .

In conclusion, the bishops "record their conviction that conspicuous, sustained, and

wide-spread effort in this direction, more particularly on the part of Christian laymen, is required at the present time, as one special sign and form of the witness of the Church to the all-sufficiency of her Divine and Incarnate Lord, and to the transforming, enlightening, and quickening power of His Spirit upon human character and life".

Certainly such words as these seem to run back behind the traditions with which the Anglican episcopate have usually been thought to have become encrusted in days of English aristocracy or of mediæval feudalism, and to remind us of the more manly strength and vigour and directness of appeal or rebuke which characterized the representative and fraternal episcopate of the early Church.

Chapter VII.

The Science and Duty of Health.

"Down to the mothers, as Faust went, I go, to the roots of our manhood,
Mothers of us in our cradles; of us once more in our glory.
New-born body and soul, in the great pure world which shall be
In the renewing of all things, when man shall return to his Eden,
Conquering evil, and death, and shame, and the slander of conscience—
Free in the sunshine of Godhead—and fearlessly smile on his Father."
(Eversley, 1852.)

There is one little-known name among the band of Charles Kingsley's Christian Socialist friends of which some record ought to be made here, for it is the name not only of a man of most brilliant and original genius, a scientific thinker of singular freshness and power, but of one who exercised upon Charles Kingsley a very potent influence, at first during years of youthful friendship as an example of unconquerable faith in truth and goodness, and afterwards as a noble and inspiring memory. What Arthur Hallam was to Lord Tennyson, such to a very great extent seems to have been Charles Blachford Mansfield to Kingsley. They were undergraduates together at Cambridge, and close friends after-

wards for seventeen years until Mansfield's death—a death which was also a martyrdom in the cause of science. In the sketch of his life which Kingsley prefixed to a volume of letters by Mansfield on *Paraguay*, *Brazil*, *and the Plate*, there is a description of Mansfield in the Cambridge days which is worth quoting, for it helps also to complete our picture of Kingsley himself:—

"The next thing which drew me to him was his intellect, not merely that he talked of the highest things, but he did it in such a wonderful way. He cared for nothing but truth. He could argue by the hour, but never for arguing sake. None can forget the brilliance of his conversation, the eloquence with which he could assert, the fancy with which he could illustrate, the earnestness with which he could enforce, the sweetness with which he could differ, the generosity with which he could yield. Perhaps the secret of that fascination, which even at Cambridge, and still more in after-life, he quite unconsciously exercised over all who really knew him (and often, too, over those who but saw him for a passing minute or heard him in a passing sentence, yet went away saying that they had never met his like) was that virtue of earnestness. When I first met him at Cambridge he was very full of Combe's works and of Volney's *Ruins of Empires*. He was what would be called a materialist, and used to argue stoutly on it with me, who chose to

be something of a dualist or gnostic. I forget my particular form of folly. But I felt all through that his materialism was more spiritual than other men's spiritualism, because he had such an intense sense of the truly spiritual, of right and wrong. He was just waiting for the kingdom of God. . . . When the truth was shown to him he leapt up to embrace it. There was the most intense faith in him from the first that right was right, and wrong wrong; that right must conquer; that there was a kingdom of God eternal in the heavens, an ideal righteous polity, to which the world ought to be, and some day would be, conformed. That was his central idea; I don't say that he saw it clearly from the first; I don't say that he did not lose sight of it at times, but I know that he saw it, for he was the first human being that taught it to me. Added to this unconquerable faith in good was an unconquerable faith in truth. He first taught me not to be afraid of truth. If a thing is so you can't be the worse for knowing that it is so, was his motto, and well he carried it out."

Mansfield became one of the most promising chemists in England, one for whose future renown no hope could be too high pitched. He was the discoverer of the coal-tar products, a discovery which has to a great extent revolutionized the art of dyeing. His unfinished work on *Aerial Navigation* is said by competent authorities to lay down the

lines on which that great achievement of the future will have to be worked out. His lectures at the Royal Institution on benzole, and on the chemical elements, were characterized not only by most patient observation, but by a most vivid and original scientific imagination. It was generally expected that he would have been Faraday's successor.

But this was not to be. At the zenith of his genius God called him to Himself, and he gave away his life quite simply, as Kingsley relates, to save others. By the mistake of a lad who assisted him in his chemical experiments, a still of naphtha boiled over and caught fire. He might easily have escaped; but he feared an explosion which might destroy the premises. He lifted the burning still in his arms to carry it out, but the door was shut; he tried to hurl it through the window, but it dropped from his hand, half flayed with liquid fire. He scrambled out, rolled in the snow, and so extinguished the flames. After which he had still to walk a mile to a cab, leaning upon a woman's arm. He was taken to the Middlesex Hospital, where he was most carefully tended, and where relatives and friends took turns to watch him. Nothing, however, could save him, and to use Kingsley's words

—"after nine days of agony he died like a Christian man"[1]

It was Kingsley that brought Charles Mansfield into the Christian Socialist movement. In all their undertakings Mr. Ludlow has testified he was one of their most regular, most trustworthy, though most unobtrusive of workers. In *Politics for the People*, under the pseudonym of "Will Willow-wren", he wrote two articles entitled "Politics of the Fields", unfinished vignettes, alas! of bird-life and natural things, and the lessons to be learnt from them, articles intended to be complementary to those of "Parson Lot" on the "National Gallery".

"For there is a universal and a national gallery" —so Mansfield wrote—"other than that in the formal pile behind the fountains of Trafalgar Square; and into this we can take frequent looks with much comfort to our eyes and not little profit to our souls. Perhaps you will allow one who has spent a good many whole hours among these pictures to jot down a few notions concerning them for the benefit of his brethren among the farms and meadows, and for those of our town cousins who come down among us occasionally, to bless Him who made the hills, the woods, and the railways.

"These pictures of ours are all the work of God, though they are not more this than are those in

[1] *Economic Review*, January, 1894.

London His handwriting on the wall. For if God did not paint upon the canvas, neither did the human artists, but the paint-brushes or the devil. Our gallery here has, however, this advantage, that the devil, though he has dabbled a good deal in oil colours, has never yet tried his hand at creation. The devil may have sneaked up the staircases in Trafalgar Square (if so, no doubt Parson Lot will find him out); but here our criticism need not be on its guard. Our country collection is all of genuine handiworks, with the divine autograph legible upon every one—of none can it be said that they are second-hand from heaven.

"It is in the woods, in the streams, and on the sea-cliff side that they are hung; and the sky is the window that lights them. Beauty is there in all its elements. The gallery is universal, but a part of it is national to us—English in its scenery, English in its life. Though the artist of all the specimens is one and the same, there is no mannerism there, yet a method and a reason breathes through all. The chamber that is painted for Englishmen has characters which mark its style, but do not separate it as distinct from the others, which all own the same author, and appeal each to a sympathy deep in the hearts of those who will spare their eyes to read them . . . We cannot yet thoroughly interpret them all, but the endeavour to understand a few of them may be less useless than a headful of phenomena; and if the seeds sown in humility grow not up into a plant fruitful in science, the branches of thought decaying may at least become

a soil on which future roots may be crowned with a foliage of wisdom."

How fresh and delightful too is this writing on "Friendship with the Birds", graphic and original of phrase, melodious and gay and fantastic, and yet as full of keen observation as Kingsley's own *Charm of Birds*!—

"Why are we inclined to friendship with the birds? This wise: man was made by God a good spirit; such that the true, the open, the unconcealing, is grateful music to his sense; and the nation of birds is exactly that one, of all the neighbour races, that emphatically expresses the idea of candour, unreserved and unashamed. They are the living sacraments of truth. Their lives are for the most part passed in open day; their motions as they sweep across the clouds, or gambol in the gutter, are equally among things outward and visible.

"Not that the other types of being—the hairy and the scaly—are symbols of evil or even of attributes less divine than those of which the feathery forms are the expression. Gravity and wisdom and sorrow, perhaps, are there, and many deep good things not clearly seen; for the open secret of nature is closer there than where the voices of the birds declare it.

"But they are more than truth; joy, too, is here developed in life. Their every note, their every motion, is joy; not the innocent, careless mirth of simple innocence, which lambs or young lions

frolic into parables, but the deep heartfelt joyousness of conscious integrity. It is to be read in the attitudes of all, from the sea-gull screaming round the headland, to the little wren who makes the snow-wreathed thatch ring with his thrilling melody.

"There is scarcely such a thing as a melancholy bird. It is a sentimentalism entirely visionary and confutable, which some metre-and-rhyme writers have sanctified in verse, which speaks of sad birds and melancholy songs. For instance, the complaints of the nightingale! Who can listen to the gushing strains of that little half-ounce of choral ecstasy, and call it melancholy? It is utter incommunicable merriment; you would say it was tumultuous, if it did not last all night and all day long too; the little throat will burst before it can tell you all its joy—how he has sailed thousands of miles over desert Africa, over boisterous Biscay, and troubled France—to meet his own love under that oak tree, with whose leaves he will build her a couch when he has sung enough; and how there on the very actual day appointed, she had met him. This is what you can hear in that 'jug, jug, jug, tirhading", as some German bird-cager has printed it, and no milksop whining about nothing at all. The poet who first called that bird plaintive, was one of the old pagan school, who vowed that no man could write decent verses who had not been swilling wine—sour Falernian; and the man who repeats it now, either does so from sheer faith in the inspiration of his ancestor, or from the stupid influences of copious beer.

"There are, however, some few birds that do seem exceptions; not, however, to prove the rule (for creation's types have not any such impossible way of demonstrating truth), but to remind us that we have not read all the book at the first glance, but that mysteries are there yet unrevealed. There is a gladness about a homeless cuckoo: is there a tale there of a magnet (sic) that has lost its keeper—of an isolated heart, victim to its own approach to feminine perfection—of an only one now among the foundlings? And it will try to sing: is it a merry song of former days, that fails now at the second note, and a few weeks later at the first, and then is choked altogether, when the gay little finches dart at it, as if in spite against a bird of prey? There is no rapacity there, but quiet endurance. And a little later it is gone—gone to a far distant sunny land, where it will be gay again no doubt, and perhaps may remember that tune of which we long so much to hear the end.

"The owls and night-jars speak not of overflowing mirth, but they are not to be excepted as sad. Theirs is a quiet contentment, which sits at home and meditates, when it can be of no use abroad, and then at evening, when its duty calls it forth, is up and doing. But there is no doubt that our quiet friends, the owls and their similars, are less expressive of the *beau-ideal* of bird-life than most others of their nation; but they are birds, and therefore to be loved and to be listened to, for we may learn of them.

"Let us not forget that a bird—a dove—was the

bearer of good tidings to the old weather-vexed faith-steered navigator, Noah; and that, later still, a deeper mystery is represented to us under the same form."

It was from his friend Mansfield that Kingsley seems to have gained much of his early enthusiasm for the cause of sanitary reform. In the early days of the Chartist movement, Mansfield, in conjunction with Mr. J. M. Ludlow, had drawn up the programme of a National Health League, whose objects were stated to be the "uniting of all classes of society in the promotion of the Public Health, and the removal of all causes of disease which unnecessarily abridge man's right to live". The League was intended to be worked by means of local and district committees, whose duty it should be "(i.) to collect and diffuse information; (ii.) to further the due execution, and, when necessary, the amendment, of the law; and (iii.) to stimulate and assist all public bodies and private persons in the performance of their respective duties in reference to the Public Health". The idea of the society was a good one, but Mr. Maurice thought the programme at that particular juncture to be premature. It was accordingly dropped, to be revived, however, later

in "The Ladies' National Sanitary Association", which has done such good work in later years in the promotion of truer ideas as to the duty of public health.

Meanwhile Kingsley, at the time of the outbreak of cholera in 1849 had preached three sermons which had attracted much attention by their outspoken denunciation of the popular notion that the cholera was a special visitation of God sent as a national punishment, and demanding the proclamation of a national fast and confession of sins. Upon the recurrence of the cholera five years afterwards, Kingsley republished these sermons, with a preface, entitled "Who causes Pestilence?" from which it may still be useful—for the foolish sneer as to "the Gospel of Drains taking the place of the Gospel of Salvation, in the Broad Church scheme of doctrine", is even yet not quite obsolete—to quote the ground upon which Kingsley was accustomed to base his strong opinion that the promotion of the science of health was a distinct obligation of the Christian Church.

"As a clergyman," he says, "I feel bound to express my gratitude to Lord Palmerston for having refused to allow a national fast-day on the occasion

of the present reappearance of pestilence, and so having prevented fresh scandal to Christianity, fresh excuses for the selfishness, laziness, and ignorance which produce pestilence, fresh turning men's minds away from the real causes of this present judgment, to fanciful and superstitious ones.

"It was to be hoped, that after the late discoveries of sanitary science, the clergy of all denominations would have felt it a sacred duty to go forth on a crusade against filth, and so save the lives of thousands, not merely during the presence of cholera, but every year.

"We cannot plead ignorance as an excuse. The facts of sanitary science are at once so notorious, and so easy of comprehension, that ignorance in an educated man must be either wilful and deliberate, or the consequence of a stupidity which ought to unfit any man from any office or responsibility. This may be the case with some; but the majority of preachers and ministers seem to care little about sanitary reform for one of three reasons:—

"(1) Some fancy that the business of a clergyman is exclusively what they choose to call 'spiritual', and that sanitary reform, being what they choose to call a 'secular' question, is beyond their province.

. . . . . .

"But I can say, proudly and joyfully, as a clergyman of the Church of England, that this notion is dying out daily under the influence of those creeds which tell that *the Son of God has*

redeemed all mankind, body, soul, and spirit, and therefore teaches clergymen to look on the physical and intellectual improvement of every human being as a duty no less sacred than his spiritual welfare. Nevertheless there is still too much of this lazy and selfish Manicheism left among us; and on the too probable reappearance of cholera in the spring, Britain will reap the bitter fruits of it.

"(2) Some again dislike the notion of its being possible to abolish pestilence by sanitary reform, because it seems to interfere with their own religious theories and doctrines. Of them there is nothing to be said but that that man is to be pitied who can shut his eyes to facts, and deny the evidence of his own senses and reason, for the sake of preserving his own dark and superstitious calumnies against the God of order, justice, and love.

"(3) Some again—and perhaps the larger class—do in their hearts believe the truths of sanitary science; but they are afraid, especially if they get their subsistence on the voluntary principle, of arguing them too plainly and boldly, lest they should attack the vested interests, and thereby excite the displeasure of wealthy and influential members of their congregations.

. . . . . .

"Let all these three classes of ministers, of whatever denomination they may be, . . . consider the enormous power which they might have employed, which they can still employ—each man in his pulpit, his congregation, his parish—to deliver those from death whom the covetousness and the

neglect of man have appointed to die; and then let them solemnly ask themselves whether, unless they bestir themselves very differently from what they have yet done, their brothers' blood will not cry against them from the ground? . . . As surely as there is a merciful God who answers prayer, He has answered the prayers of those two first cholera Fasts in the best way in which rational beings could wish a Heavenly Father to answer prayer, namely, by showing us how to extirpate the evil against which we prayed. And if the Bible be true, then as long as ministers are careless about doing that, the only answer they can expect to fasts or prayers is that ancient one:—

"'When ye come to appear before Me, who hath required this at your hands, to tread My courts? Bring no more vain oblations; your Sabbaths and your calling of assemblies I cannot away with; it is iniquity even your solemn meeting. . . . Your hands are full of blood. Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of your doings from before My eyes: cease to do evil; learn to do well: seek justice, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow.'

"This, it seems to me, if the Bible be indeed an inspired Book, setting forth God's dealing with man, is the only answer which we can expect to any national prayers, till we have, by sanitary reform, done what God has taught and commanded us to do."[1]

In one of the most eloquent speeches that

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. ii. pp. 83–85.

Kingsley ever made—that on "The Massacre of the Innocents" at the first meeting of the Ladies' Sanitary Association—he placed his appeal for the recognition of the duties of public health on even nobler ground.

"'If it seemed to them', he said to his audience, 'as I confess it does to me, that the most precious thing in the world is a human being, that the lowest and poorest and most degraded of human beings is better than all the dumb animals in the world; that there is an infinite, priceless capability in that creature, degraded as it may be—a capability of virtue, and of social and industrial use, which, if it is taken in time, may be developed up to a pitch, of which at first sight the child gives no hint whatsoever; if they believed again that of all races upon earth now, probably the English race is the finest, and that it gives not the slightest sign yet of exhaustion; that it seems to be on the whole a young race, and to have very great capabilities in it which have not yet been developed, and, above all, the most marvellous capability of adapting itself to every sort of climate, and every form of life that any nation, except the old Roman, ever had in the world; if they considered with me that it is worth the while of political economists and social philosophers to look at the map and see that about four-fifths of the globe cannot be said as yet to be in anywise inhabited or cultivated, or in the state in which man could make it by any fair supply of

population and industry and human intellect, then perhaps they may think with me that it is a duty—one of the noblest of duties—to help the increase of the English race as much as possible, and to see that every child that is born into this great nation of England be developed to the highest pitch to which we can develop him, in physical strength and in beauty, as well as in intellect and in virtue.

. . . . . .

"There are people who talk of the ill-health of themselves and their children as 'afflictions' and 'misfortunes'; and if they be pious people they talk of 'the will of God' and 'of the visitation of God'. I do not like to trench upon those matters, but when I read in my Book and in your Book that 'it is not the will of your Father in Heaven that one of these little ones should perish', it has come to my mind sometimes with very great strength that that may have a physical application as well as a spiritual one, and that the Father in heaven, who does not wish the child's soul to die, may possibly have created that child's body for the purpose of its not dying except in a good old age. Not only in the lower class, but in the middle class, when one sees an unhealthy family, then in three cases out of four, if one takes time, trouble, and care enough, one can, with the help of the doctor who has been attending them, run the evil home to a very different cause than the will of God; and that is, to a stupid neglect, a stupid ignorance, or, what is just as bad, a stupid indulgence.

. . . . . .

"Oh it is a distressing thing to see children die! God gives the most precious and beautiful thing that earth can have, and we just take it and cast it away; we cast our pearls upon the dunghill and leave them. A dying child is to me one of the most dreadful sights in the world. A dying man, a man dying on the field of battle, that is a small sight: he has taken his chance; he has had his excitement; he has had his glory, if that will be any consolation to him; if he is a wise man, he has the feeling that he is doing his duty by his country, or by his king, or by his queen. It does not horrify me or shock me to see a man dying in a good old age, even though it be painful at the last, as it too often is. But it does shock me, it does make me feel that the world is indeed out of joint, to see a child die. I believe it to be a priceless boon to the child to have lived a week or a day; but oh, what has God given to this thankless earth, and what has the earth thrown away, in nine cases out of ten, from its own neglect and carelessness? What that boy might have been, what he might have done as an Englishman, if he could have lived and grown up healthy and strong!

. . . . . .

"Ah, would to God that some man had the pictorial eloquence to put before the mothers of England the mass of preventible suffering, the mass of preventible agony of mind and body which exists in England year after year! And would that some man had the logical eloquence to make

them understand that it is in their power, in the power of the mothers and wives of the higher class, I will not say to stop it all—God only knows that—but to stop, as I believe, three-fourths of it.

"It is in the power, I believe, of any woman in this room to save three or four lives, human lives, during the next six months. It is in your power, ladies, and it is so easy. You might save several lives apiece if you choose, without, I believe, interfering with your daily business, or with your daily pleasure, or, if you choose, with your daily frivolities, in any way whatsoever. Let me ask, then, those who are, and who have not yet laid these things to heart: . . . Will you learn — I say it openly—from the noble chairman (Lord Shaftesbury) how easy it is to be earnest in life; how every-one of you, amid all the artificial complications of English society in the nineteenth century, can find a work to do, and a noble work to do, chivalrous work to do—just as chivalrous as if you lived in any old fairy land, such as Spenser talked of in his *Faery Queen*, how you can be as true a knight-errant, or lady-errant, in the present century, as if you had lived far away in the dark ages of violence and rapine? Will you, I ask, learn this? Will you learn to be in earnest, and use the position and the station and the talent that God has given you to save alive those who should live? And will you remember that it is not the will of your Father that is in heaven that one little one that plays in the kennel outside should perish, either in body or in soul?"[1]

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. ii. pp. 81–86.

More and more as the years went on Kingsley gave himself to this crusade for the promotion of sanitary science, devoting to it time, influence, and thought. The volume published in 1874, under the title of *Health and Education*, consisting of such well-known lectures as that on "The Science of Health", "The Two Breaths", and "Nausicaa in London", sum up his teaching on the subject. They are all written with the same leading idea, which is also the key-note of almost everything that he has written. It is this. To do our duty in this world towards God and towards man, consistently, steadily, and not hysterically, needs the fullest development possible of all the faculties which God has given us. The mind in an unhealthy body is itself of necessity unhealthy. Care must therefore be taken to exercise the body and to keep it in health. To violate the known laws of health therefore was, with Kingsley, to commit physical sin. Sanitary law ought to be obeyed by the free-will and enlightened judgment of the people, but, failing that, must be enforced by legislation.

In all Kingsley's lectures and addresses during the later years of his life he had thus ever before him a twofold object. First, to

educate the individual and the public conscience in the duties of health; and secondly, to press unceasingly upon the Government the necessity of amending and perfecting sanitary legislation in the interests of the public health.

In regard to this second object, an immense progress has been made in the last twenty years. At the present time the Public Health Acts of the country furnish us with almost all that is needed, and sanitary science, the science of preventive medicine, occupies a foremost place in the attention of all thoughtful statesmen. But with regard to Kingsley's first object, that of instructing and stimulating both the individual and public conscience in the science and duties of health, much remains to be done.

And it is just here, as Charles Kingsley was never tired of proclaiming, that the Church of Christ has so great an opportunity.

If it will but recognize that opportunity, and the duty which that opportunity imposes, it will be the means of affording invaluable aid to the nation. When one remembers, on the one hand, that immense army of human beings annually stricken down in this country by preventible disease — in plain

words, slain either by culpable carelessness or by ignorance scarcely, if at all, less culpable: and when one remembers, on the other hand, the immense engine of influence that might be brought to bear by the pulpits of this land, it does indeed seem lamentable that there should be any hesitation on the part of the Christian Church to embark in the great work, not only of denouncing that carelessness, but also of instructing that ignorance.

To any man who believes, as Charles Kingsley did most firmly, that the body of man is not only the shrine which contains the soul, but a shrine which, under certain conditions, fashions and modifies the soul itself, there can surely appear no task more noble, no aim more worthy of the energies of any church or Christian community than that of removing those conditions of ignorance and squalor and disease which are the chief obstacles at present in the way of man's attainment to that fulness and perfection of stature which is the true height of his destiny.

Chapter VIII.

Some Personal Characteristics.

"A RIGHTEOUS MAN

Who loved God and Truth above all things,
A man of untarnished honour—
Loyal and chivalrous—gentle and strong—
Modest and humble—tender and true—
Pitiful to the weak—yearning after the erring—
Stern to all forms of wrong and oppression,
Yet most stern towards himself—
Who being angry yet sinned not.
Whose highest virtues were known only
To his wife, his children, his servants, and the poor.
Who lived in the presence of God here,
And passing through the grave and gate of death
Now liveth unto God for evermore."

Such are the words which Mrs. Kingsley has inscribed on the first page of the book of *Memories* of her husband's life. They are high and noble words. But the book in which they are written proves them to be as true as they are noble. It is the record of a life which must always go to the heart of the generous-minded of every age. But, especially for the young, one would fain hope, Charles Kingsley's *Memories* will always remain a book of inspiration to lofty ideals of character and life. One thinks it must be so. For there is always a charm about any per-

sonality in which the elements of romance and chivalry are marked features of character. And this was essentially so with Kingsley.

I remember once, when I was an undergraduate at Cambridge, attending the course of lectures which Kingsley as Professor of History was then delivering on "The Normans in England", being much struck with certain words of Her Majesty the Queen, which he quoted in his lecture, but which, with characteristic modesty and loyalty, he quoted as words which "the highest lady in this land had once said to a certain professor:"

"It grieves me, sir," said Queen Victoria, "to see that the young men of the present day are losing the spirit of romance and chivalry. They try to be old men of the world before they are even young men of the world. They are too prone to laugh at anything earnest."

I hope the Queen's estimate of the youth of England was not entirely true even of the last generation. It is certainly not true of the present. And if it is not so, I do not think it is too much to say that the influence and teaching of Charles Kingsley has been a very large factor in the result. For his writings have been rich in many sources of teach-

ing and help to our age. There have been many writers, no doubt, of higher literary rank, but few who by their works have given their generation so much pleasure, and still fewer who have given it in such a thoroughly healthy and invigorating way. And certainly no intelligent reader ever rose from a perusal of Kingsley's books without feeling himself a stronger, more natural, more sympathetic human being, or without an increased sense of that faith in God and nature which was always at the centre of Kingsley's thought. His two earliest novels, *Yeast* and *Alton Locke*, stirred up, it is true, much vehement and bitter hostility to their author, but this in a great measure he lived down, and the novels which followed — *Hypatia*, with its noble sketch of the Neoplatonist virgin and martyr on the background of the strange seething life of Alexandria; *Westward Ho*, with its half-pagan hero and glorification of the Elizabethan sailors who fought the Armada; *Two Years Ago*, with its crowd of living and moving figures, and the fine manly character of Tom Thurnall; *Hereward the Wake*, with its picturesque descriptions of the weird Fenlands—kindled such personal love and enthusiasm for their author, as made the name of

Kingsley, for those readers at least of a generation ago, the very synonym for goodness and chivalry and all knightly service. To these the age of chivalry had certainly not gone by. For here in the author of these stirring books—felt by those who could read him intelligently as a personal friend—was "the very gentle, perfect knight,

> . . . sent forth upon the field of life
> To war with evil".

But Kingsley, romantic knight-errant as he was, was also emphatically a man of his own time. "With Kingsley," says Max Müller, "his life and his work were one. All he wrote was meant for the day he wrote it. He did his best at the time, and for the time." The vices he warred against, the science of which he was the popular exponent, were all things of the present. Whatever illustrations he might adopt from history it was to the present that he applied them. Whether he was writing of the old days of "Roman and Teuton", or of the courtly and foul "harlotocracy" of France in the eighteenth century; or of the old struggle between pagan philosophy and the early Christian Church, as in *Hypatia*, or between tyranny and freedom,

superstition and religion, as in *Westward Ho*, the present was as much before him as when he wrote of cleanliness and whitewash in *Two Years Ago*, or of the abominations of tight-lacing and high heels and "the nasty mass of false hair" in the *Nausicaa in London*.

But it was also perhaps because Kingsley wrote essentially of the present and for the present, that his writing did sometimes become careless and extravagant in style, abounding in passages of wild, unchastened eloquence, sometimes even of almost aimless declamation, in which some things were apt to get said which both Christian feeling and scholarly taste must alike condemn. Yet in this very inartistic *abandon* of style there is always a strange magnetic power in his writing which defies analysis, a glow and a rush and a poetic intensity which blinds the reader to its defects. The note of his genius, it has been well said, is "breeziness"; the power of moral bracing, the faculty of conveying by his words a sense of rapid and joyous movement through a clear and strengthening atmosphere—of flushing the cheek as air does, of quickening the pulses as a gallop does, of toning the nerves to pleasure till merely to be alive seems enjoyable, of making men feel through

his thought not only better, but less loaded, healthier, more alive. The famous hunting scene in *Yeast* is perhaps one of the most characteristic instances of this quality. I have even heard it said that not a few officers returning from foreign service took the first opportunity of going to Eversley to see with their own eyes and hear with their own ears the parson who could paint such a picture of the hunting-field as that described in the opening chapter of that volume. It is this same quality which makes the familiar letters written to his friend Judge Hughes such wholesome pleasant reading. They may be found on the closing pages of the first volume of the *Memories*. Their hearty humour and homely slang seem to bring the man before us even more vividly than any of his more studied writings. And yet I think it is well to warn those who did not know Kingsley personally that they should be on their guard against a misreading of Kingsley's character, into which these letters, taken in connection with much of what the late Mr. Judge Hughes wrote of his friend, might otherwise lead them. Charles Kingsley was as little like his friend's hero "Tom Brown at Oxford" as possible. As one of his nearest

relatives writes to me—"He was the least *rowdy*, the most courteous and dignified of men. . . . He died, alas, when I was still quite a young girl; but he remains to me the most perfect example of self-control and unselfishness in daily intercourse, the most admirable example of a courtly gentleman in manner and bearing that I have ever known. These things with him were so simple and instinctive as to be almost pathetic in a person of such great natural gifts."

No one who ever was in Kingsley's presence for half an hour could doubt the truth of that characterization. But the most gracious courtliness of general bearing was in no way inconsistent—why should it be?—with the merriest *abandon*, the most boyish high spirits, on occasion. There is no better evidence of this than in these holiday letters[1] to "Tom Hughes", especially, perhaps, in the galloping rhythm of this *jeu d'esprit*, one of the most genuinely humorous of all Kingsley's verses:—

"Come away with me, Tom,
Term and talk are done;
My poor lads are reaping,
Busy every one.

[1] *Letters and Memories*, vol. i. p. 492.

Curates mind the parish,
Sweepers mind the court;
We'll away to Snowdon
For our ten days' sport:
Fish the August evening
Till the eve is past,
Whoop like boys, at pounders
Fairly played and grassed.
When they cease to dimple,
Lunge and swerve and leap,
Then up over Siabod
Choose our nest and sleep.
Up a thousand feet, Tom,
Round the lion's head,
Find soft stones to leeward
And make up our bed.
Eat our bread and bacon,
Smoke the pipe of peace,
And, ere we be drowsy,
Give our boots a grease.
Homer's heroes did so,
Why not such as we?
What are sheets and servants?
Superfluity?
Pray for wives and children
Safe in slumber curled,
Then to chat till midnight
O'er this babbling world—
Of the Workman's College,
Of the price of grain,
Of the tree of knowledge,
Of the chance of rain;
If Sir A. goes Romeward,
If Miss B. sings true,

If the fleet comes homeward,
  If the mare will do,—
Anything and everything—
  Up there in the sky
Angels understand us,
  And no saints are by.
Down and bathe at day-dawn,
  Tramp from lake to lake;
Washing brain and heart clean
  Every step we take.

. . . . . .

Though we earn our bread, Tom,
  By the dirty pen,
What we can we will be,
  Honest Englishmen.
Do the work that's nearest
  Though it's dull at whiles.
Helping, when we meet them,
  Lame dogs over stiles;
See in every hedgerow
  Marks of angels' feet,
Epics in each pebble
  Underneath our feet:
Once a year like schoolboys
  Robin-Hooding go,
Leaving fops and fogies
  A thousand feet below."

It is easy of course to criticise the racy colloquialism of such verses as these as slip-shod and inartistic, and indeed of Kingsley's more serious poetry it is sometimes possible to say that it is wanting in that reticent self-

control, in that serenity and stateliness, in that perfect poetic accent, in fact, which characterises the great masters. And yet, after all, is it any great disparagement of such a man as Kingsley to say that all his poetry is of the nature of *improvisation*, had at least only such inspiration as that of the old ballad writers, who thought only of what they said, and not at all of how they said it? His shortest poems are thus always the best, and one or two of them, such as *The Sands of Dee* and *The Three Fishers*, may be sung for centuries to come; and certainly the world will not readily forget the four beautiful songs from *The Water Babies*, the sweet idyllic grace of the lyrics *The Tide River* and *The Summer Sea*, or the tender pathos and cheery optimism of *When all the World was Young, Lad*, and *I once had a Sweet Little Doll, dears.* His *Last Buccaneer* too is, of its kind, only just not perfection. With what a fine ballad-like swing do these lines carry one along with them.—

"Oh sweet it was in Avès to hear the landward breeze
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside, that never touched the shore.
. . . . . .

And now I'm old and going—I'm sure I can't tell where;
One comfort is, the world's so hard, I can't be worse
off there:
If I might but be a sea-dove, I'd fly across the main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avès, to look at it once again."

Kingsley at any rate had one advantage over most of the minor poets of our generation. He never wrote poetry but when he could not help it.

Mr. Ludlow gives us a touching illustration of this characteristic of his friend when he tells us that *The Three Fishers*—a little masterpiece which has obviously influenced the creation of a greater poem yet, Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*—was forced out of him by Mr. Drew's insolence towards him in S. John's Church.

That incident may well be quoted for another reason. It furnishes a noble illustration of the self-control which he was able to exercise over his fiery and vehement spirit, and of how little even under unjust accusation there was in him of bitterness or rancour or resentment.

At the time of the first great Exhibition Kingsley had been asked, through Mr. Maurice, to take part in a series of sermons which were being preached to working-men

in S. John's Church, Fitzroy Square. The incumbent, Mr. Drew, had assured Mr. Maurice that "he had been reading Kingsley's works with the greatest interest, and desired to secure him as one of his lecturers". Under these circumstances Kingsley consented, and took as his subject, "The Message of the Church to Labouring Men". It was such a sermon as any reader of his books might have expected him to preach.

"'I assert,' he said, 'that the business for which God sends a Christian priest in a Christian nation is to preach freedom, equality, and brotherhood in the fullest, deepest, widest meaning of these three great words: that in as far as he does, he is a true priest, doing his Lord's work with his Lord's blessing upon him: that in so far as he does not, he is no priest at all, but a traitor to God and man;' and again, 'I say that these words express the very pith and marrow of a priest's business: I say that they preach freedom, equality, and brotherhood to rich and poor for ever and ever.'"

He then went on to warn his hearers how there is always a counterfeit in this world of the noblest message and teaching, and concluded by showing how the Church of Christ has three special possessions and treasures: the Bible, which contains man's freedom;

Baptism, his equality; the Lord's Supper, his brotherhood. The sermon was listened to with profound attention by a large congregation, in which were many working-men. But at its close, just as Mr. Kingsley was about to give the blessing, the incumbent of the church rose in the reading-desk and declared that while he agreed with much that had been said by the preacher, it was his painful duty to add that he believed much to be dangerous and much untrue. The excitement of the congregation was intense: the working-men could with difficulty be kept quiet. Kingsley, however, merely bowed his head, gave the blessing with deepened solemnity, came down from the pulpit, and silently passed through the crowd that thronged around him, with outstretched hands and an eager "God bless you, sir," on their lips. "Those", said Mr. Maurice, who was present, "who observed the solemnity of Mr. Kingsley's manner while he was delivering his sermon, still more when he was praying with the congregation and blessing them, will believe that the thought of having unwittingly made himself a stumbling-block to his fellow-men, was infinitely more bitter to him than any mere personal insult which he was called upon to endure."

The sequel is, I think, very touching.[1] He returned late that night to Eversley, and instead of going to bed, paced backwards and forwards in front of the rectory. His wife knew he must be composing, and the next morning he recited to her the lines:

"Three fishers went sailing away to the west,
Away to the west as the sun went down;
Each thought on the woman who loved him the best,
And the children stood watching them out of the town;
For men must work, and women must weep,
And there's little to earn, and many to keep,
Though the harbour bar be moaning."

As I began this chapter, so let me end it, with a personal reminiscence.

It is just thirty-four years ago now since I saw and heard Charles Kingsley for the first time. It was on the first Sunday of my undergraduate residence at Cambridge. He was preaching in the University pulpit the first of a course of sermons on "David". I shall never forget that afternoon. I can still see the galleries of S. Mary's crowded with the throng of undergraduates;—surely the most moving, the most inspiring congregation that preacher could well have. After the long interval of more than thirty years I can still

[1] *Economic Review*, October, 1893.

hear the intonation of his voice as he began. "We have heard much of late about Muscular Christianity. A clever expression, spoken in jest by I know not whom, has been bandied about the world, and supposed by many to represent some new ideal of the Christian character. For myself I do not know what it means. It may mean one of two things. If it mean the first, it is a term somewhat unnecessary, if not somewhat irreverent. If it mean the second, it means something untrue and immoral."

It is the lesson which Kingsley drew from the second consideration that remains in my memory; I pray God in my heart. If I thought that by anything I have written in this book I could pass on to a younger generation that lesson with half the force that it fell on my ears all those years ago I shall be amply satisfied. The fulness of organized social life, for which Charles Kingsley and the Christian Socialists laboured forty years ago, and from whose labours we in these days are still receiving so much of our present social stimulus and inspiration, we must never forget, can only gain elements of richness and variety from the free play of individuality. Character, after all, is the greatest of social

and industrial forces. And character for the Christian, as these last words of Kingsley may remind us, means self-control through communion with the Spirit of Christ:—

"'Believe it, young men, believe it,' he cried, 'better would it be for any one of you to be the stupidest and the ugliest of mortals, to be the most diseased and abject of cripples, the most silly, nervous, incapable person who ever was a laughing-stock for the boys upon the streets, if only you lived according to your powers the life of the Spirit of God. . . . Therefore settle it in your minds, young men, that the first and the last of all virtues and graces which God can give is self-control, as necessary for the saint and the sage, lest they become fanatics and pedants, as for the young man in the heyday of youth and health; but as necessary for the young man as for the saint and the sage, lest while they become only fanatics and pedants he become a profligate and cumberer of the ground. Remember this, remember it now in the glorious days of youth, which will never return, but in which you are sowing seed of which you will reap the fruit until your dying day. . . . And when the hour of temptation comes, go back, go back if you would escape, to what you were all taught at your mother's knee concerning the grace of God; for that alone will keep you safe, or angel or archangel, or any created being, safe, in this life and in all lives to come.'"

Index.

Agassiz, Professor, 36.
Air Mothers, The, 81.
Alton Locke, 123, 124, 127, 135–138.
Anglican Revival, 14, 15.
Antiparos, 11.

Booth, Charles, 133, 134.
Breaths, The Two, 177.
Brentano, Professor, 142.
Browning, Robert, 16.
Bunsen, Baron, 58.

Cambridge Platonists, 18.
Carlyle, Thomas, on *Alton Locke*, 123.
Chadwick, Mr. Edwin, 81.
Charter, The People's, 97, 98.
Chartist Demonstration, 22, 99–102.
Chartists, Three Letters to, 115–122.
Chaucer, 19.
Cheap Clothes and Nasty, 115, 132, 133.
Cholera, Sermons on, 81.
Christ, the Great Social Emancipator, 128.
Christian Socialism, 23, origin of name, 24, 25. Christian Social Union, 153, 154.
Civic Duty, 89, 90–95.
Clement of Alexandria, 18.
Clifton, 36.
Clovelly, 36, 37.
Coleridge, Rev. Derwent, 38.
Coleridge, S. T., 18, 43, 45.
Colet, Dean, 18.
Competition and Co-operation, 130, 148.
Conington, Professor John, 108, 111.
Cooper, Thomas, 102.
Co-operative Union and Congress, 146.
Co-operative Wholesale Society, 145.
Cottage Homes, 81–88.
Cudworth, Dr., 18.

Day of the Lord, The, 97.
Duty of Health, 159–179.

Ellison, Cuthbert, 142.
Erasmus, 18.
Erskine, T., of Linlathen, 18.
Eversley, 49.

Factory Acts, 134.
Fenland Scenery, 33, 34.
Fens, Lecture on, 35.
Froude, James A., 42.

Gore, Rev. Charles, 18.

Greg, W. R., 44.
Guardian, The, 70, 74.
Guild of S. Matthew, 151, 152.
Guthlac, S., 35.

Hare. Archdeacon, 103, 108.
Health, Public, 86, 159-179.
Health and Education, 177.
Health League, National, 168.
Helps, Sir Arthur, 81.
Hereward the Wake, 35, 152.
Hermits, The, 35.
Hippolytus, 18.
Hort, Professor, 16.
Hughes, Judge, 185-188.
Human Soot, 81.
Hypatia, 182.

Illingworth, Rev. J. R., on the Incarnation, 19.
Incarnation, Doctrine of, and its Social Aspect, 18-29, 89.
Industrial and Provident Societies Acts, 144.

Jelf, Dr., 24.
Jones, Mr. Lloyd, 142.
Journal of Association, 115.

Keble, Mr., 15, 17.
Kingsley, Charles, birth and environment, 30-73; a poet, 30; at Cambridge, 40; his wife, 41; influence of Coleridge, 45; marriage, 49; as parish priest, 49-55, friendship with Mr. Maurice, 55-57; *Yeast*, 61-72; Village Problems and Citizenship, 73-96; Letter on Land Questions, 75, 76; Chartist Demonstration, 99-102; meets J. M. Ludlow, 102; T. Hughes, 185-188; personal characteristics, 180-195; Sands of Dee, 189; The Three Fishers, 190; Sermons on 'David' at Cambridge, 193.
Knox, Rev. Alexander, 18.

Ladies' Sanitary Association, 81, 169, 173.
Lambeth Encyclical on Co-operation, 154-158.
Lightfoot, Bishop, 16.
Lowell, J. R., 36.
Lucas, Judge, Kingsley's grandfather, 32.
Ludlow, Mr. J. M., 11, 23, 26, 30, 102, 168.
Lux Mundi, 16, 19.

Mackaye, Sandy, 123-127.
Mansfield, Charles, 103, 159-169.
Marriott, Rev. C., 15.
Martineau, Mr. John, 61.
Massacre of the Innocents, 81, 173-176.
Maurice, Rev. F. D., 11, 16-29; his *Moral and Metaphysical Philosophy*, 17, 19; and Christian Socialism, 23, 24, 25, 26, 28; *Kingdom of Christ*, 46; Politics for the People, 104, 105-114.
More, Sir Thomas, 18.
Müller, Mr. Max, 58.

National Health League, 168.
Nausicaa in London, 177, 184.
Neale, Mr. E. Vansittart, 142, 143-149.
Neo-Platonists, 19.
Newman, Cardinal, 15, 16.

O'Connor, Feargus, 99, 103.
Old Saws New Set, 108-111.

Origen, 18.
Osborne, Lord Sydney G., 42, 108, 114.
Overton, Canon, 15.
Oxford Movement, 15, 17.
Oxford Reformers, 18.

Parish Councils, 91.
Parker, Mr. J. W., 103, 104.
Parson Lot, origin of name, 115.
Philo and the Alexandrian Schools, 19, 46.
Politics for the People, 97–116.
Powles, Mr., 39.
Prose Idylls, 37.
Pusey, Dr., 15, 16, 18.

Queen, Her Majesty the, on Chivalry and Romance, 181.

Recess Committee, Report on Agriculture and Village Industries, 78–81.
Rose, Rev. Hugh J., 17.

Saint's Tragedy, 30, 57, 58, 59, 60.
Science of Health, 159–179.
Scott, Mr. A. J., 103, 108.
"S. G. O.", 42, 108, 114.
Simon, Sir John, 81.
Smith, Dr. Southwood, 81.
Smith, Rev. John, 18.
Squire, The Bad, 67, 68.
Stanley, Dean, 103.
Strachey, Sir Edward, 108.
Sully, Charles, 142.
Sweating System, 133–135.

Tennyson, Lord, 16, 190.
The Three Fishers, 190.
Thirlwall, Bishop, 108.
Tom Brown's Schooldays, 184.
Trench, Archbishop, 108.
Two Years Ago, 182, 184.

Vansittart, Mr. Augustus, 141.
Village Citizenship, 73–96.

Walsh, Dr., 141.
Westcott, Bishop, 16.
Westminster Sermons, 46.
Westward Ho! 31, 182.
Whateley, Archbishop, 107, 113.
Whichcot, Dr. Benjamin, 18.
Williams, Isaac, 15.
Wilson, Archdeacon, on Co-operation, 147.
Women's Trades-unions, 134–135.
Working Men's Association, 139, 141.

Yeast, 61–72, 182.

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